A CENTURY

OF

CONGREGATIONALISM

IN OHIO.

REV. DELAVAN L. LEONARD, D. D.

1896.

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BY

REV. DELAVAN L. LEONARD, D. D.

Prepared by request of the Executive Committee of the Ohio Home Missionary Society.

OBERLIN, O.,
1896.

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PREFACE.

We cannot at all afford to suffer the anniversaries of great events to pass by without careful observance. They bring so much of peculiar privilege and opportunity, so much also of especial responsibility and obligation. It is the part of the highest wisdom to use them to the utmost, both for instruction and exhortation, for encouragement and warning. They supply fit occasions for reminiscence and forecast, they help us so to sum up and set forth the past as to send us forward with new inspiration and added increments of spiritual power. In particular this centennial year demands wide spread and varied celebration in our churches. For it recalls one of the notable events in the progress of the Kingdom of God in this land, and one of the most momentous in the history of our denomination It not only marks the beginning of civilization, of democracy, of Christianity in the entire Northwest from Pennsylvania to the Pacific, but it stands for the founding of the mother Congregational church in a vast region which already contains fully half of our ecclesiastical inheritance. Our center of population is steadily moving westward, is likely soon to cross the Mississippi; and already not Boston, but Chicago is the metropolis of our Zion.

With wise prescience, three years since our State Association began preparation by choosing a committee to act with a similar committee appointed by the Ohio Church History Society in preparing a suitable program for a celebration worthy of the unique occasion. The result appeared a few days ago when in Marietta, at a joint meeting of the two bodies, were read a noble list of papers upon appropriate themes. Besides, at their meetings during the weeks just preceding, the various local Conferences gave marked prominence to centennial topics. In the meantime the Executive Committee of the Ohio Home Missionary Society had been diligently considering how so "to keep the feast" that a much needed quickening might come to our spiritual life as a denomination, especially as touching zeal and giving and toil in behalf of aggressive operations, and pushing of our ideas and principles in localities where they are wholly unknown. It seemed to be every way desirable that from the Association and the Conferences, to every church and congregation in the state the inspiring and educating influences of the centenary should be carried by addresses of various kinds, which should tell the story of our origin and growth in this commonwealth, the experiences through which our fathers passed, what achievements have been made, and what still remains to be done. And to bring this desirable consummation to pass the more easily and effectually it was thought that an outline history of the century of Congregationalism in Ohio was a real *desideratum*.

By a strange chance (providence, that is) in 1887–8, soon after his arrival in the state, under the conscious impulse of nothing more definite than a historic instinct, the writer had gone thoroughly over the field of our denominational genesis and exodus in Ohio, consulting all the authorities, and treasuring up the results in a mass of notes which were laid aside with no thought of any further use. And lo, now the opportunity had come to put them to service. The Executive Committee requested that this material be arranged and prepared for publication, offering to secure the funds required for printing outside of the treasury of the Home Missionary Society. These pages are the outcome. But, though issued under such request and authorization, it should nevertheless be understood that the Committee are not in the least responsible for the contents of this pamphlet. No word of suggestion was offered. The opinions and convictions expressed belong wholly to the writer. Whatever faults appear are chargeable to him alone. It will also doubtless be observed that what is here presented is not "pure" history, but is rather history written with a purpose, or designed for a particular use. While accuracy and judicial fairness have been carefully sought, the centennial year was constantly in mind, and a style sermonic and even hortatory was not deemed out of place, in order the more to stir the minds and hearts of the reader to appreciate our ecclesiastical inheritance, and to love our principles and fundamental ideas. And, since these pages are designed for the people as well as for the pastors, it was not considered to be necessary always to maintain a style dignified and stately. And finally, let it be remembered that the work has been performed under the pressure of great haste. Should inelegancies and infelicities of expression occasionally appear, or even inaccuracies of statement, this fact may render them somewhat less blameworthy.

It would be a serious omission if two names in particular were not mentioned among efficient helpers in the performance of this labor of love. Professor A. S. Root, librarian of Oberlin College, repeatedly offered fullest and freest access to the ample literary treasures under his care, aiding materially also in searching for stores of information hidden in divers obscure out-of-the way places. And Dr. J. G. Fraser, whose mind, after ten years of observation and research as secretary of the Ohio Home Missionary Society, has become a very thesaurus of accurate knowledge concerning the condition of our Ohio Israel, upon the least hint of desire has poured out facts and figures in lavish abundance.

No attempt will be made to name all the authorities which contain the material out of which a history of Congregationalism in Ohio must be fashioned. Records of the older churches to the number of nearly two score have been consulted, with historical addresses and church manuals in much greater number. The files of the *Ohio Observer* and the *Oberlin Evangelist* are indispensable to the historian, especially whenever he desires to behold both the Oberlin and the anti-Oberlin side of things. Kennedy's Plan of Union is a classic, only needing to be taken with the caustic pamphlet of Professor Henry Cowles written in reply. The Minutes of the Ohio State

Association are another rich mine of historical matter, as well as the records of the Association of the Western Reserve, and of the Lorain County Association. The six volumes of papers published by the Ohio Church History Society are filled with the annals of churches, conferences, and religious movements, and cannot be spared. Punchard's History of Congregationalism contains a valuable chapter (V; 167–222), and Gillett's History of the Presbyterian Church (II; 117–154). Walker's Creeds and Platforms of Congregationalism, and his History of Congregationalism, are helps of great value, as well as Dunning's Congregationalism in America. Besides these, the investigator needs to consult various articles published during the fifties and sixties in the *Congregational Quarterly*, the *Congregational Review*, and the *New Englander*. Nor must Moore's History of Huron Presbytery be passed by, which, with fulness of information and a sufficiency of candor, gives the Presbyterian view of the ecclesiastical happenings during the Times of Tempest.

D. L. L.

Oberlin, May 25, 1896.

ERRATA. By an unaccountable oversight, on page 26 the date of the founding of Austinburg Church is given as 1802, instead of 1801 as it should be, and so in the same sentence the date of Hudson also is put one year too late.

On page 28 Hartford Church among others is said to be extinct, whereas it still survives, though under the name of Croton.

A CENTURY OF

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1796-1896.

CONGREGATIONAL PRINCIPLES.

CONGREGATIONALISM is the democratic form of church order and government. It derives its name from the prominence which it gives to the congregation of Christian believers. It vests all ecclesiastical power in the associated brotherhood of each local church, as an independent body. But at the same time it recognizes a sacred bond of fellowship between these churches; differing thus widely from Independency, which so affirms the seat of ecclesiastical power to reside in the brotherhood as to ignore any check, even of advice, upon its action.

FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION.

I. Any company of people believing themselves to be, and publicly professing themselves to be Christians, associated by voluntary compact, on gospel principles, for Christian work and worship, is a true church.

EQUAL MEMBERSHIP RIGHTS.

II. Every member of such a church has equal essential rights, powers and privileges with every other (even the minister being not set to lord it over God's heritage); and

the membership, by a majority vote, have the right and duty of choosing all necessary officers, of admitting, dismissing and disciplining their own members, and of transacting all other appropriate business.

INDEPENDENT CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

III. Every such church is independent of any outward jurisdiction and control, being answerable directly and only to Christ, its head ; and every church is on a level of inherent genuineness, dignity and authority with every other church on earth.

FRATERNAL CHURCH FELLOWSHIP.

IV. Intimate fellowship should be maintained among churches by means of conferences, associations, and the like ; and when serious difficulties arise, or specially important matters claim decision, the advice of other churches should be sought in councils.

CONDITION OF MEMBERSHIP.

V. A credible profession of faith in Christ is held to be the sole condition of membership and communion. Perfect agreement in details of doctrine and practice is not required, and while none but true Christians should be admitted, it is not desired that any true Christian shall be excluded.

CHRISTIAN UNION.

VI. As a distinctive trait the Congregational system exalts that which is more above that which is less important, and by the simplicity of its organization facilitates, in communities where the population is limited, the union of all true believers in one church. Desiring to be free from any narrow sectarianism, and insisting upon no denominational peculiarities as the condition of membership, church fellowship is offered to all who acknowledge Christ.

The following utterance of the National Council of Congregational Churches held in 1895 well represents the convictions and longings of the denomination:

We propose to other Protestant evangelical churches a union based on

1. The acceptance of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments inspired by the Holy Ghost to be the only authoritative revelation of God to man.

2. Discipleship of Jesus Christ, the divine Lord and Savior and the teacher of the world.

3. The Church of Christ, which is his body, whose great mission it is to preach his gospel to the world.

4. Liberty of conscience in the interpretation of the Scriptures and in the administration of the church.

Such an alliance of the churches should have regular meetings of their representatives and should have for its objects among others:

1. Mutual acquaintance and fellowship.

2. Co-operation in foreign and domestic missions.

3. The prevention of rivalries between competing churches in the same field.

And whereas it cannot be expected that there shall be a speedy corporate union of the numerous bodies into which the Christian Church of our own land is divided, we do, therefore, desire that their growing spiritual unity should be made manifest by some form of federation, which shall express to the world their common purpose and confession of faith in Jesus Christ, and which shall have for its object to make visible their fellowship, to remove misunderstandings and to aid their consultations in establishing the kingdom of God in the world; and to this end we invite correspondence with other Christian bodies.

These two additional statements present the same fundamental principles of this form of church polity in a more popular way. The first one is borrowed from the Congregationalist Handbook for 1895, and answers the question, For what does Congregationalism stand?

Perhaps the best Scripture motto for Congregationalism is the text: "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." The basal principle of our denominational polity is the absolute equality of all believers under the headship of Jesus Christ. Our polity proceeds on the assumption that when the Spirit of God touches a man, and he passes through that experience termed the new birth, he at once takes his place beside his fellow-believers. None of them has a right to lord it over him, nor he over them. To the end of greater efficiency in carrying forward Christ's work, Congregationalists

may delegate to one or more of their number certain special functions, but the power to select their officers and give them their proper functions rests with the churches and not with any hierarchical or priestly order over the churches. The minister gets whatever special standing and recognition he has from his fellow-believers, who alone, we think, have a right to set apart to this office those who seem to be called of God to serve their brethren in this way. As individual Christians inevitably gravitate together and form a local church, so churches obey the same law and associate themselves in conferences and councils. But here again the paramount principle obtains. None of the associated churches has any prerogatives over the others. Deference may be and is paid to the judgment and advice of the sister churches, but they have no power to order any particular course in the internal affairs of a local church.

At first it might seem as if the possession of such a measure of independence by every individual might lead to differences, and might militate against good order and united action ; but as a matter of fact Congregationalists do work together with as little friction and with as large results as are to be found in any denomination. What saves them from disunion, both in the local church and in their relations as churches, is the fact that every Congregationist submits himself, or is supposed to submit himself, to the leadership of Christ through his Spirit.

And the other, from the Advance Almanac for 1896, is a setting forth of, Our Polity :

Congregationalism is neither an experiment nor a spent force. It is a living fact and a polity to be preached everywhere that the gospel is heard. Its adherents believe in the new birth, and then in the fruits of rightousness. They preach repentance toward God, and faith in his divine Son, Jesus Christ.

A Congregational church is a union church, associated with other union churches. It is an independent church co-operating with other independent churches. It is a kingdom within itself, acknowledging only Christ as Master and Lord. It has just as many bishops as pastors. It recognizes no ecclesiastical government higher than that of the local church. It does not believe that Jesus Christ has a court on earth, either in synod or general assembly. It believes that there is safety in a multitude of counsellors. It believes in co-operation. It is one of the greatest missionary forces ; its members give more *per capita* to the spread of home and foreign missions than any other people in the world. It is older than any other denomination. The Christian church was first Congregational, then Presbyterian, then Episcopal, and then Papal. Congregationalism goes back to the beginning. It is not a reformation only, it is a restoration—an ecclesiastical solvent among the other denominations. It is the solution, and the only solution, of the movement among Christians who are tired of warring sects. It is a common denominator. It is not anchored to the past. It receives the Bible as the word of God, recognizing the fact that its depth is not fathomed, nor its breadth mea-

sured, nor its height reached, but holding that there is more light to break forth from it. It has a quick ear, a keen vision, and a ready hand for all good work. The doctrines on which all evangelical denominations are agreed are the ones on which Congregationalism insists. For the things about which they differ it cares not at all. It is looking upward and forward, with "the past unsighed for, and the future sure."

The religious belief of the Congregational churches is expressed in the various creeds of the local organizations, and also "for substance of doctrine", in the Westminster Assembly's Confession, and other formulas more modern. The Burial Hill Creed of 1865, and the Creed of 1883, are very generally held in high esteem by American Congregationalists—both as being more catholic in spirit, and expressed in language more simple and less likely to be misunderstood. "But no one of these is received as universally binding on the conscience, or as the necessary test of fellowship. The Scriptures alone occupy that position; his understanding of which each Christian minister is free to express in his own form of words, to the satisfaction of his brethren."

ORIGIN AND HISTORY.

It is believed that the Congregational polity is the one adopted by the apostles in organizing the primitive churches. The New Testament never speaks of "the church" as an external, centralized body, embracing and ruling a number of congregations. The word is used only to mean the general company of all the redeemed, or a particular band of believers in a particular place. Thus, it speaks not of the church of Asia, but of "the churches of Asia," "the churches of Judea," "the churches of Macedonia;" and of the particular bodies, "the church which was at Jerusalem," "the church in the house", of Philemon, Nymphas, and others. The working of these churches seems to have been Congregational. The assembled brethren elected an apostle to fill

the place of Judas. (Acts 1:15-26.) The brotherhood at Jerusalem chose seven deacons by ballot. (Acts 6:3-5.) The church at Corinth was urged to discipline its refractory members. (I Cor. 5:1-7; 6:1-5.) The elders (or bishops) are forbidden to exercise authority in the church. (I Pet. 5:3.)

This democratic system seems always to have prevailed in apostolic times. Gieseler, an eminent historian, says, "the new churches in Palestine formed themselves after the pattern of the mother church at Jerusalem." Mosheim, a noted Lutheran writer, says, "the assembled people, therefore, elected their own rulers and teachers, or by their free consent received such as were nominated to them. They also, by their suffrages, rejected or confirmed the laws that were proposed by their rulers in their assemblies. Every individual church recognized itself as an independent community—not recognizing any sort of external influence or authority." The testimony of Neander is the same.

But in the latter part of the second century unchristian dissensions arose among the clergy, and Jerome suggests that an officer, called a bishop, was appointed to quell them. New offices were then created. The road was open to ambition, and selfish men improved it; and the simple democracy of the apostles soon degenerated into the oppressive hierarchy of the Papacy.

As early as the twelfth century a little band known as the Waldenses, in the Cottian Alps, resisted the invasions of the Romish power, and in spite of persecution, maintained their simple methods. They claimed to have inherited their religion from the primitive Christians. But with this exception, all Christendom was in bondage until the Reformation. The right of private judgment was then asserted; though the simple organization of early days was not fully re-established. But in England, in the time of Queen Elizabeth, a Puritan party grew up in the church, unwilling to conform to

what they considered idolatrous usages. Persecution followed, and some of them left the Establishment entirely and became Separatists, while others adhered to it under protest, and were called Nonconformists.

About the year 1600, some of the Puritans, driven by their troubles "to see further into these things by the light of the word of God," became convinced of the wide divergence of all the hierarchies from the original simplicity of the early churches, and resolved to return to the democratic method of the apostles. They organized in Scrooby in 1606 the first Congregational church after the Reformation. Violent persecution befel them, and they fled to Amsterdam, in Holland, with John Robinson, their pastor, one of the most learned, sagacious and godly men of his time. After a year they removed to Leyden, where they lived eleven years. But it became evident that Holland was not the place for their permanent home, and one division of the church embarked in the Mayflower, and crossing the sea, landed on Plymouth Rock, December 22, 1620, here to establish "a Church without a bishop and a State without a king." This was the first church in New England, and almost the first Protestant church in the New World. It was more than eighty years afterward that the first Presbyterian church was organized in Philadelphia, and a hundred and fifty years later that the first Methodist church was formed in New York city.

EVOLUTION OF PRINCIPLES.

In its deepest and most essential meaning Congregationalism has always been synonymous with democracy, the rule of the people in religious affairs, and including the three prime factors, liberty, equality, fraternity. But in its historic development, the expression of these fundamentals in individual and corporate life, progress has been slow and pain-

ful, and has been achieved only through centuries of experiment, blundering and costly failure. And, according to universal law, the ripest and best results are among the last to make their advent. From the beginning until now this form of church polity has suffered serious damage from evil environment. To all appearance its spiritual ideas, its noble conception of human nature as renewed and inspired by the Divine Spirit, were utterly vanquished and annihilated by the brute forces dominant in the old Roman world, while later followed the more hopeless violence and chaos resulting from the irruption of the Barbarians. And again, when the day of resurrection dawned, kingcraft and priestcraft were yet supreme, the prescription of monarchy, aristocracy, prelacy and scholasticism extended to every realm, the individual had no rights, the masses were but as cattle to be driven, or as children to be fed and nourished, to receive commands and to submit to discipline. Tremendous revolutions political, social, intellectual and religious were required before this free church order could enter fairly upon its beneficent career; the rough work of Cromwell and his Puritans, and even such cataclysms as the French Revolution. The Anglo-Saxon race was the divinely chosen instrument, at first with Great Britain as the sublime theater, which later was transferred to the New World, with the Declaration of Independence and the setting up of the American Republic as necessary steps. And even then democracy was scarcely more than an ideal, a theory, a dream, and to many only a hateful dream. Fifty years more were required before we possessed in the fullest sense a government of the people, by the people and for the people.

In particular, for more than two centuries after the Landing at Plymouth the genius of Congregationalism was seriously circumscribed and fettered. Its normal growth was hindered, and lamentable deformity was produced by the cooperation of various external forces. Such, for example, as

the hardships and perils of life in the forest and upon the frontier, with the dire accompaniment of frequent Indian wars. The excitements, too, of the French War and of the Revolution were demoralizing in the extreme. Then the Puritan founders of New England were so false to the principles of their polity, or were so deficient in spiritual knowledge, as to feel constrained to lean upon the civil arm for support, to look to legislatures and governors for defence against heresy and moral laxity, to set magistrates to compel observance of the Sabbath, attendance upon public worship and payment of taxes for the support of the gospel. To be sure, in this they were simply no wiser than their generation. Church and state were united in all Protestant countries, even in the American colonies with one or two exceptions. Only a few Baptists, Quakers, and Separatists like the Pilgrim fathers at Plymouth, had attained to ideas of toleration and liberty which now are fast becoming universal. But this form of tyranny re-acted to their serious spiritual detriment upon those who gave it countenance, and besides drove thousands out of the denomination by which it was inaugurated, as well as led directly to the Half-way Covenant, whereby the churches were filled with unregenerate persons, of which the outcome was some generations of spiritual deadness, and a final widespread lapse into Unitarianism. Closely allied with this sad departure from the Christian way was another, that connected with the rigid rule of the clergy, especially in Connecticut where they wielded wide authority through the consociation, or standing council. The churches must not be left to themselves but must be regulated and held to righteousness by some higher ecclesiastical authority.

To these prolific sources of evil was added the sway of a hyper-Calvinistic system of theology which landed not a few in formalism and fatalism, and with the theocracy became largely responsible for the entering in of Universalism. Still another demoralizing tendency is seen in the

fact that at first of necessity Congregationalism took mainly the form of protest, and resistance, and rebellion as touching all attempts whether of kings or prelates to trespass upon reason and the moral sense. In the dire extremity they would die sooner than obey and conform under compulsion, even in matters non-essential and comparatively insignificant. And so deadly was the strife, so severe were the sufferings for generations, that fear of despotism became morbid, and in order to make liberty ample and absolutely secure the churches refused to unite for any purpose, and preferred isolation with all its weakness and peril. The nineteenth century was well started on its course before conferences and associations were fashioned with no object but to further union, fellowship, co-operation, spiritual quickening, and pledged one and all never in the least to essay the exercise of ecclesiastical authority. The fulness of religious freedom was hastened in its coming when Congregationalism emerged from the narrow limits of the East, and entered upon its magnificent career of helping to conquer for Christ the continental spaces of the Mississippi Valley and the Pacific Slope. Properly with wonder do we dwell upon the Providence which freed the Fathers from the thraldom of the Old World and bestowed the matchless opportunities of the New, but not so often and thoroughly do we appreciate the significance to the denomination of the second migration, scarcely inferior in importance to the first, which began with the founding of the first church beyond the Alleghenies on the borders of the Great West.

In spite of manifold drawbacks and some staggering losses, Congregationalism has had a notable history, and has attained to proportions by no means inconsiderable. In 1800 the number of churches was 850, and of members 100,000, and fifty years later these had increased to 2,000 and 206,-

000. The figures which follow set the growth of more recent years.

Year.	Churches.	Ministers.	Church Members.	In Sunday Schools.
1859	2,511	2,544	250,452	228,984
1864	2,667	2,798	262,649	277,398
1869	3,043	3,068	310,362	356,502
1874	3,403	3,278	330,391	385,338
1879	3,674	3,585	382,540	437,505
1884	4,092	3,889	401,549	478,357
1889	4,689	4,640	491,985	610,227
1895	5,342	5,287	583,539	677,935

Following is the growth of thirty years, as shown by Secretary Hazen's report to the National Council: When the Council met in Boston, in 1865, it represented a constituency of 2,745 churches with a membership of 262,649 in 23 states and territories. It has made its way in the thirty years, into 26 states, and is now at home in every state save Delaware, and every territory except Alaska. It has added 2,597 churches to its roll, almost doubling their number, and it has gained 322,890 in its membership, an increase of more than 122 per cent. During the same time the population of the country has increased from a probable 35,000,000 in 1865, to a probable 69,000,000 in 1895, or 94 per cent, giving our churches a ratio of increase 28 per cent. larger than that of the population with which we have to do. In the West, California has multiplied its churches more than tenfold, from 19 to 196; Colorado from 3 to 57, Kansas from 32 to 187; Nebraska from 10 to 186; Oregon from 6 to 52; while in the four great states, which in 1865 had not even a name, all are now represented; Washington by 113 churches; the Dakotas, North and South, by 224 and Oklahoma, youngest born of our sisternood, by 63.

But not all who bear our denominational name are citizens of the United States. For in the British Isles, known as Independents, dwell almost as many more; with many tens of thousands additional upon the Continent, in Australia, South Africa, and the Islands of the Sea. So that if all these are included, the total would not fall much below 1,400,000 communicants, representing a population of at least 7,000,000. But the fellowship of those who find warrant in the Gospel for absolute freedom from clerical domination and church judicatures, far surpasses such figures as these. Thus there are the Baptists a great host, and the Disciples

with nearly 1,000,000 members, and various smaller bodies. It would be no exaggeration to put the number of those who prefer the Congregational polity at 35,000,000.

THE SITUATION IN 1796.

As gazed upon through the long vista of intervening years the date seems exceedingly remote, and especially if we catch a glimpse of the astounding changes which during the century have been wrought in every realm. We are carried back to times that wear a look most ancient and primitive. Though Columbus had been in his grave for three hundred years, the world was as yet largely unknown. The career of Captain Cook ended in 1779, and he it was who revealed to human knowledge the myriad islands thick-strewn through the vast spaces of the Pacific. It was only in 1788 that "Botany Bay" in "New Holland" had been made a dumping ground for criminals, while "Van Dieman's Land" was occupied for the same purpose not until 1803. For generations longer Africa was *terra incognita*. Great Britain laid hands upon Cape Colony in 1795 and ownership was made sure in 1806. It was between exactly the same dates that Mungo Park, the first of African explorers, at the cost of life was urging his way through swamps and forests in search of the upper waters of the Niger, and Livingstone, the greatest of these, was born in 1813. The Bastile fell, and the French Revolution began its course so terribly sublime two years after by the Ordinance of '87 the Northwest Territory was created, and only a twelvemonth before the first settlers landed at the mouth of the Muskingum, to found a city named in honor of the unfortunate Queen who five years later met her bloody fate. The year from which this Centennial is reckoned was marked also by Napoleon's first brilliant and victorious campaign in Italy.

In our own country the period of infancy was not yet passed. Just two decades before the Declaration was signed, Cornwallis surrendered in '81, the Confederation gave place to the "more perfect Union" when General Putnam and his companions were finishing their first winter in the wilderness of Ohio. Detroit remained in British hands until the very year under view. Washington was still President, with three years of life remaining ; the city which bears his name was not occupied as the Capital of the nation until the first year of the new century. Vermont had been admitted to statehood in 1791, Kentucky not many months after, while Tennessee and the Marietta church came into being within a few weeks of the same date, so that now the General Government bore sway over sixteen commonwealths. But as yet the entire Gulf coast and the whole region from the Mississippi to the far Pacific coast was held by European powers. Louisiana was Spanish soil until 1800, and in 1803 was purchased by Jefferson from Napoleon ; and almost at once Lewis and Clark were dispatched up the Missouri, across the Rockies and down the Columbia to inspect the new possessions. Florida was ceded in 1819, while Texas was not annexed till 1845. Of the first generation of statesmen Adams and Jefferson survived nearly thirty years, and Madison and Burr a decade longer. Of the second generation John Quincy Adams had attained to the age of twenty-nine, Clay was now nineteen, while Benton, Calhoun, and Webster were but lads of fourteen. The famous orations at Plymouth and Bunker Hill belong away down in 1820 and 1825. Of course the third generation of public men, who figured in the days when slavery culminated in secession, were not born. No more had any save the very eldest of that shining galaxy of American writers as yet seen the light. Irving was now a youth of thirteen, Cooper a lad of seven, and Bryant an infant of two.

In the religious world in like manner all modern things

were either wholly unknown or else just beginning to appear. Thus Carey's memorable sermon which resulted in the founding of the first missionary society, was preached in '92, and a year later he set sail for India. The century closed before his first convert was baptized. The Danish Lutheran mission at Tranquebar was established in 1706, with Schwartz as its most eminent representative, who survived until '98, and for some sixty years the Moravians had been sounding out the Gospel in divers desolate regions ; but the heralds of the Cross in the entire foreign field numbered but a score or two. The London Missionary Society dates from '95, and while the Marietta saints were covenanting together upon the banks of the Ohio the first contingent sent out was in the midst of a perilous voyage to the remote South Seas. The English Church Missionary Society was organized in '99. To conquer China for Christ, Morrison took his departure from England in 1807, and Moffat for Africa in 1818; but Fiji, the spot on earth nearest to pandemonium and perdition, was not entered with the Glad Tidings before 1835. In 1796 Mills was only sixteen and Judson a child of eight, and the American Board had no existence for fourteen years. There was no Presbyterian General Assembly before 1789. The Congregationalists were divided by state lines, and when in 1798 the Connecticut saints began to be stirred with missionary zeal in behalf of the new settlements they proceeded to form a society which should be all their own, and their brethren in Massachusetts did the same a year later. The *American* Board was the earliest of our organizations with a constituency as extensive as the nation, was followed by the American Education Society in 1815, by the Bible Society in 1816, the Sunday School Union in 1824, the Tract Society in '25, and the Home Missionary Society in '26. Of all these except the first named, the producing cause was the astonishing emigration which, as the eighteenth century was closing, began to set in towards the roomy recesses of the

Great West. And in all this unprecedented transfer of population the men and women who in 1788 fixed themselves upon the Ohio were the illustrious pioneers.

Of course the Jesuits and other orders of the Roman Catholic church had entered the Mississippi Valley centuries before. As early as 1762 two Moravian missionaries to the Indians had advanced as far westward as the upper Muskingum, but were presently compelled to take their departure. In 1772 Zeisberger, of the same choice spiritual fellowship, founded a mission in what is now Tuscarawas county, and for almost a decade labored among the Delawares with most encouraging measures of success in souls redeemed and helped well on toward Christian civilization. But in '81 the prosperous settlements were broken up by the commandant of the British forces at Detroit, and the people were exiled to the Sandusky. Six months later, being at the point of starvation, a large party returned to secure a store of corn which had been left unharvested in the fields; but while at work were surprised by a company of frontiersmen from Pittsburg, and nearly a hundred, including many women and children, were ruthlessly butchered. The survivors with their faithful pastor then sought safety in western Canada upon the Thames. In '86 they started back to re-occupy their former seats upon the Tuscarawas, but were turned aside to the Huron and founded Salem where Milan stands to-day. Five years later Zeisberger and his flock felt constrained once more to escape deadly peril by flight to the Thames across the lake. Finally in '98, two years after the Marietta church was formed, the remnant is found less than seventy miles to the north, occupying the 12,000 acres lying about Schönbrunn and Gnadenhütten which Congress had granted them. In 1808 the aged missionary passed to his reward after more than seventy years of sorest travail. By 1824 the whites had so crowded in on every side that the Indians were will-

ing to turn their backs upon Ohio and take their journey far towards the setting sun.

The Presbyterians had begun to cross the mountains even before the Revolution, and were now found not only in Tennessee and Kentucky, but also in Western Pennsylvania, especially in and about Pittsburg, and these latter were mainly of the sturdy Scotch-Irish stock. In 1781 Redstone Presbytery was set up, which eight years later contained eight ministers and upwards of thirty congregations. In 1793 Ohio Presbytery was formed from Redstone, extending to Lake Erie and covering the frontier settlements in Southeastern Ohio. But further, within a few years of the founding of Marietta, settlers by the thousand floated down the stream and located at various points upon the northern bank. A Presbyterian church is found at Cincinnati as early as 1790, and a presbytery in '99. A Baptist church also was gathered in 1790, and an association in '97. The pioneer Methodist itinerant put in his appearance in 1798. Thus the Congregationalists, though as individuals clearly first upon Ohio soil, were somewhat later than some of their brethren in beginning to organize for the strengthening and enlargement of the kingdom of God. From the first Sabbath the Marietta disciples maintained religious services, and after the first year were blessed with the services of a pastor, but several settlements were combined in the congregations to which he ministered, and the Indian wars which raged from '91 to '95 put serious hindrances in the way of formal ecclesiastical beginnings.

THE GENESIS OF OHIO.

The Northwest was discovered by LaSalle, Marquette and their associates, and therefore the region lying between the south shore of Lake Erie and the Ohio was claimed by

France. It was held however not for purposes of settlement, but only for the sake of traffic with the Indians. About the middle of the eighteenth century English colonies from the seaboard began to cross the Appalachians to explore, or hunt, or in search of new homes. By the close of the Revolution a considerable population was to be found in East Tennessee and on the Cumberland, and in the Blue Grass region of Kentucky made easily accessible from the east by Cumberland Gap. Traders and explorers had also penetrated from Pennsylvania and Virginia to the Muskingum, the Scioto and the Miamis. By 1752 the signs of British encroachment were so unmistakable that French troops were sent from Canada, and forts were constructed at Erie, on French Creek and at Pittsburg. It was to capture the latter that Braddock set out upon his ill-starred expedition three years later. But Ohio was meant for freedom and Protestantism, and when in 1759 the Latin was vanquished by the Anglo-Saxon race on the Plains of Abraham, the happy consummation was made sure.

The upper valley of the Mississippi was now British territory, and it became American as a result of the Revolution. For several years however the Federal Government was not able to possess and control its own. Various states, under colonial charters which gave them such colossal areas that the Pacific was the boundary on the west, laid claim to the entire northwest.* But one after another they were persuaded to surrender whatever rights they had. New York was the first to yield in 1781. Three years afterward Virginia accepted the

*The generosity of King Charles II was so lavish that his charter for Connecticut embraced all lands contained between the forty-first and forty-second parallels north, and from Providence plantations on the east to the South Sea on the west, with the exception of New York and Pennsylvania colonies. In excuse for the pleasure-loving monarch it should be added that according to tradition, when he inquired how far distant the ocean might be, the cute Yankee petitioner made answer that some said *its waves could be seen from the tops of the highest hills!*

inevitable, reserving only the Military District lying between the Little Miami and the Scioto, as a bounty for her sons who had fought in the war for Independence. In 1785 Massachusetts also gave way, but Connecticut held out a year longer, and then signed away all her western lands except a body of 3,800,000 acres located in the extreme northeast corner. This tract constitutes the famous Western Reserve, which has played such a magnificent part in the entire history of the state. Its northern line was Lake Erie, and its southern line was the forty-first degree of north latitude. The length is one hundred and twenty miles from east to west, while the width varies from sixty-eight miles on the Pennsylvania border to about twenty-five in the western portion, with an average of not far from fifty.

The French were dispossessed, and the British, and Congress now has full control; but behold, the Indians are in occupancy everywhere, like the Delawares, Wyandots, Ottawas, Chippewas, Mingoes and Shawanese, nor have they the least intention of resigning these fertile valleys and these choice hunting and fishing grounds at the bidding of the whites. To be sure the Six Nations in 1784 by treaty at Fort Stanwix relinquished their claims to the territory, and the Ohio Indians were mistakenly supposed to have done the same the year following at Fort McIntosh. But when in due season they beheld settlers by the thousand entering from the east and south, these jealous and determined warriors were roused to indignation, and for the better part of a decade made furious resistance to aggression with wholesale fire and slaughter. They proved more than a match for two armies sent against them, under the lead of Generals Harmar and St. Clair. Nor was it until after Wayne's overwhelming victory at the battle of Fallen Timbers, near the Rapids of the Maumee, in 1795, that the braves consented to surrender all lands east of the Cuyahoga and the Tuscarawas, as well as all south of a line drawn from a point on

the latter stream near the boundary between Stark county and Tuscarawas, westward to the portage between the Big Miami and the Maumee. But even yet well nigh a third of the territory now included in the state was closed to settlement, including half of the Western Reserve. In 1805 by the treaty of Fort Industry this latter portion was transferred to the whites. But it was not until 1818 that the northwestern section of the state was wholly freed from aboriginal dominion, the Moravian Christian Delawares held their reservation on the Muskingum until 1824 and it was as recent as 1842 that the last tribe emigrated from Ohio to the west.

The next step in order for the Government was to open for settlement this imperial tract to which it had fallen heir. In 1786 the task was undertaken by Thomas Hutchins, the geographer of the United States. Seven ranges of townships were ordered to be laid off, each six miles square. Starting from the point where the Ohio river crosses the western boundary of Pennsylvania, in person he ran a line westward, now known as the "Geographer's Line," over the hills of Columbiana and Carroll counties, and forty-two miles in length. At each mile a post was set and on each side witness-trees were marked. Every six miles was a town corner. From these corners surveyors ran the meridian or range lines south to the Ohio, and also the east and west town lines. In '87 this land was offered for sale at auction, but on account of Indian troubles and from other causes for some years was not in great demand. In fact, two momentous transactions were indispensable to the genesis of the state which was to be; the fashioning of the forces which were to lead to the founding of Marietta, and the sale by the state of Connecticut of its lands on the Western Reserve. New England had already begun to overflow at an astonishing rate into eastern and central New York, and in the interests of Christianity and civilization was making ready to dis-

patch thousands of her best sons and daughters to lay the foundations of great commonwealths in the wilderness beyond the mountains.

In 1785 General Rufus Putnam had been appointed by Congress one of the surveyors of the Seven Ranges, and had sent forward General Benjamin Tupper to fill temporarily his place. At the close of the first season the latter brought back such an enthusiastic report of the country that in March of the next year the Ohio Land Company, composed of officers and soldiers, was formed in Boston, with Putnam and Rev. Manasseh Cutler among the directors, and a scheme to purchase a large tract just west of the Seven Ranges, on the Ohio, and on both sides of the Muskingum. It was near the end of 1787 before the land was secured, and the pioneers were ready to begin their long journey through the forests and over the Alleghenies to enter the land of promise. But this notable undertaking was curiously connected in various ways with a vastly greater one which Congress was considering during the same months; to wit, the framing of an ordinance for the government of the Northwest, of which Ohio was to form a part. Various hands wrought upon this immortal document, among them Jefferson, Nathan Dane, Rufus King and Rev. Manasseh Cutler, and July 13 of '87 it became irrevocable law, and the whole vast region from Pennsylvania to the Father of Waters was consecrated forever to freedom, intelligence, morality and religion. It was under such a celestial ægis that Putnam and his company of forty-eight reached the Youghiogheny in February of '88, constructed boats, naming one the Mayflower, descended the Ohio, and April 7 stepped ashore at the mouth of the Muskingum.

The second beginning, a hundred and fifty miles to the north, and hard by the lake, was made later by nearly a decade, but all things considered, was for Congregationalism in Ohio and throughout the entire West, a vastly more sig-

nificant event. In this from first to last Connecticut was the chief instrumentality. In 1795 a land company, composed of some three hundred and twenty of her most substantial citizens, had purchased the Western Reserve of the state; less 500,000 acres, constituting the "Fire Lands," which had been bestowed upon citizens who had suffered from incursions of the foe during the Revolution. The next year, exactly a century since, Moses Cleaveland with a party of fifty-two persons, two of them women, set forth up the Mohawk, along the southern shores of Lake Ontario and Lake Erie, kept the Fourth of July in patriotic fashion at Conneaut, just inside of the boundaries of "New Connecticut," pushed forward the survey for which they were sent, and by the close of autumn had laid out a city at the mouth of the Cuyahoga, whose population numbered but two families during the months next ensuing.

In order to complete the setting forth of the non-religious aspects of the beginnings of our churches in the state, it will suffice to add that about three months after the nineteenth century company of Pilgrims landed from the Mayflower upon the soil of Greater New England, General St. Clair, the newly appointed governor, and the other officials, inaugurated the government of the Northwest Territory, with Fort Harmar for defence across the Muskingum to the west. Not until 1799 did Ohio begin a separate existence, when a territorial legislature was elected and began to frame statutes for the rapidly increasing population. In 1803 the boon of statehood was secured, with Chillicothe as capital. In 1816 the seat of government was transferred to Columbus. It was a great event in Ohio when, in 1811, the first steamboat was built at Pittsburg; and also when the National Turnpike, begun at Cumberland, Md., in 1807, was completed to Wheeling in 1820, and extended to Springfield during the next fifteen years; and a much greater when in 1825 the Erie Canal was opened, with a system of water-

ways following hard after which gave this state several lines of communication between the Lake and the River; but greatest of all when before the end of the thirties the railroad had entered. These figures will afford some idea of the early development of our commonwealth. In the opening year of the century the population numbered but 45,365, which by 1810 had increased to 230,760; ten years later to 581,434; by 1830 to 937,903; and by the close of the next decade to 1,519,467, only New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia now containing more inhabitants. In 1850 it had attained to the third place, and held the same until the last census, when through the enormous growth of its metropolis, Illinois ascended to this place of honor.

THE DAYS OF THE PIONEERS.

It will be convenient to divide Congregational history in Ohio into three periods; the first covering about fifty years, and extending to near the close of the fourth decade; the second including about half as many years, and ending early in the sixties, which may be termed the days of darkness, or the times of conflict and chaos for our Zion; and the last extending to the present, and characterized by a steadily growing denominational consciousness and development of organic life, as well as by a normal and remarkable increase of numbers. And the task of reviewing the story of the origin and early growth of our churches will, perhaps, be better performed by making these topographical divisions; the region lying adjacent to the mother settlement; the Cincinnati country, including other territory in the interior; New Connecticut; and the northwest, which was the latest to be redeemed from the rule of the red man and the forest.

I. IN SOUTHEAST OHIO.

The founders of Marietta were wholly of sturdy Puritan stock, though not all especially Christian either in character, or the motives which brought them so far from home to lay foundations in the wilderness. But among them were not a few possessed of strength of purpose, noble ambitions, and large ideas of what institutions the new community should create and cherish. Both learning and religion should be held in honor. The first Sabbath was observed as a day of rest, and July 15 Rev. Daniel Breck, a member of the Ohio Company, being present, in a bower a general gathering was held for public worship, made up in part from the neighboring garrison, about three hundred in all. But in March preceding a committee had been chosen "to consider the expediency of employing some suitable person as a public teacher at the settlement now making." At the same time a plan was formed to secure money by subscription to sustain churches and schools. Moreover (in those medieval days state and church were still closely connected), it was required by the act of Congress under which the Company held its lands that "section 29 should be given perpetually for the support of religion." In August Dr. Cutler arrived on a visit, and for four Sundays preached in a block house on Campus Martius. General Parsons officiated on Thanksgiving Day, and March 19 of '89 Daniel Story, a licentiate from Boston was present, to begin a ministerial career which lasted twelve years. This devoted servant of God, with Joseph Badger, of whom mention will be made further on, must be honored and revered as *the* pioneer preachers of our faith and order, when the heavenly spirit which inspired Robinson, and Bradford, and Winslow, and Winthrop first entered on its career of conquering for Christ the western forests, the prairies, the Great Plains, and even to the Golden Gate. His ordination for various reasons did not occur

until '98, to secure which he must needs make a journey to Massachusetts. But meantime his energies were fully taxed in ministering to the spiritual needs of his neighbors. During six years of hostilities with the Indians his lonely journeys through the woods from hamlet to hamlet were made often at the risk of his life. For nine long years the organization of a church was delayed, and then no council nearer than the Hudson River was possible to extend the right hand of fellowship. Some forty, men more than half of them, entered into covenant, gathered from four communities, including Belpre twelve miles down the Ohio, Waterford about as far up the Muskingum, and Vienna, Va., and each supplying a deacon. As the fashion then was in the East, in 1801 a religious society was formed, one hundred and twenty-seven male citizens signing the constitution. Three years later Mr. Story resigned the pastorate and soon died, worn out by the exposure and severe strain of frontier life. Just before this the earliest of ecclesiastical troubles and schisms befel, when certain disaffected spirits of Presbyterian antecedents withdrew and brought into being a second congregation. In 1805 Samuel P. Robbins became pastor of the original church, and in May of 1809 a sanctuary costing $7,349.03½ was finished and dedicated, which with thorough repairs in 1836, and a much more extensive overhauling thirty years later, is doing good service to-day.

In the meantime population had been steadily pouring into this portion of the state, but for the most part non-Congregational in origin and sentiment, so that the mother organization was long left almost without neighbors or fellowship. It is true that a church is heard of as existing early at McConnelsville on the Muskingum, and now the capital of Morgan county, as well as one still further up the same stream at Springfield (Putnam), now the western part of Zanesville, which after two years (*ex more patrum*) was merged in a Presbyterian church. In all seventeen churches

which once existed within fifty miles of Marietta leave only their names behind. Moreover, in 1798 a Rev. Lyman Potter with his son-in-law had bought a tract of land on Mingo Bottom, a short distance below Steubenville, and formed a church thereabouts whose lease of life was also but brief. As representing a cheering promise that sadly failed of fulfilment, in 1809 the Muskingum Congregational Association was organized by Messrs. Potter, Robbins of Marietta, and Harris of Granville, Licking county. After seven years this body, born prematurely, ceased to be. Such in brief is the early story of the polity we love in the southeastern section of the state. Belpre became a distinct organization in 1827, Harmar, across the river, dates from 1840, during the same decade three others followed located not far away, and three more in the fifties, with others sufficient to raise the number in Marietta Conference to thirteen, with a membership of over 1,200. The First Church has 408 members, and Harmar 232.

II. SOUTHWEST AND CENTRAL.

The summer which followed the advent of the first settlers to Marietta saw an excited and enthusiastic multitude descending the Ohio, and fixing themselves at various points which seemed attractive, even as far down as the fertile bottoms of the two Miamis. A few chose for a home the site of the future Cincinnati. To these so many others were added the year following, emigrants mainly from New Jersey, that by 1790 the way was prepared for the organization of a Presbyterian church. But it was six years later before anything occurred of especial pertinence to this history, and in the self same famous year which our Centennial recalls, when certain energetic, enterprising and godly Welshmen, recently from North Wales, and Independents by strong conviction, began to gather hereabouts waiting for the lands to be opened for occupation. Among them were Ezekiel Hughes

Edward Bebb, and two brothers, Morgan and William Gwilyms. By 1801 they began to locate in various townships near the line separating Hamilton county from Butler. For the better part of a generation from time to time their numbers were increased by accessions, in part by families of New England birth, but to a greater extent by immigration from Wales, Yankees and Welsh easily meeting and co-operating on the best of terms. After a year they began to receive the ministrations of an English Congregational clergyman from Cincinnati, Rev. J. W. Brown, who also organized them in 1803 into the Whitewater Congregational Church, at Paddy's Run. This was our fourth church west of the Alleghenies, located in the extreme southwestern corner of civilization, with Marietta more than three hundred miles up the Ohio, Austinburg, formed in 1802, almost within sight of Lake Erie in the remote northeast corner of the Western Reserve, and Hudson dating from the year after. Only dense and pathless forests lay between. Not many of our churches have made a nobler record than this one. Education has been looked after by a high school, a boarding school, and library association, with the natural result seen in the sending out of a succession of men to fill worthily important public stations. "These men and women were so truly Christian and liberal in their views that they could agree upon a confession of faith and rules of practice so scriptural, and satisfactory, that from 1802 to 1878 there had never been but one attempt, and that unsuccessful, to form another evangelical church in that community." Nor is it a slight honor and privilege that this body of disciples by priority of origin, can rightly claim primacy among the sisterhood of forty-two Welsh Congregational churches in Ohio, and with two others as oldest of all such in the United States.

For more than twenty-five years Paddy's Run was left without neighbors, or until a church was organized at Mon-

roe, Butler county, in 1829, though in 1822 one had been formed nearly eighty miles to the east at Greenfield, Highland county. In 1832 followed one in Storrs township, now within the limits of Cincinnati. Though Vine St. Church dates from 1831, it did not fully enter the Congregational fold until fifteen years later. Lawrence Street Welsh was added in 1840. In 1878, after diligent search through twenty counties situated in the southwest, just twenty churches of our order could be found, and of that number only about a dozen survive to the present day, though new ones have taken the places of some which have perished.

For various reasons one other name must be mentioned, though in some respects it suggests matters tending to denominational humiliation and sorrow. For striking, spectacular entrance into history perhaps Granville, Licking county, may vie with Marietta herself. For in 1805 the church and community were fashioned in Massachusetts and then transferred almost bodily to the wilds centralof Ohio. The Scioto Land Company had made a purchase of 28,000 acres, and persuaded some hundreds of substantial farmers to leave behind all the accessories of civilized life, and take up the rudimental task of felling the forests, breaking the soil, and building all good institutions from the very foundations. During the first year nearly two hundred and fifty of all ages had accomplished the trying journey of forty or fifty days, and were housed in log cabins. Of what excellent spiritual stuff these colonists were made we find in the fact that on the arrival of the foremost company at nightfall, no sooner were the oxen unyoked than they were ready for public worship. The Sunday after, though no preacher was present to lead, and though it was the middle of November, they gather about the stump of the first tree that had been cut on the town plot to join in prayers offered and hear sermons read by some of the abler of their number. This isolated flock was left in the wilderness for three years without a

shepherd, only visited several times by Rev. S. P. Robbins, of Marietta, traveling over a dreary stretch of a hundred miles, to marry, to baptize and to administer the communion. In the spring of 1808 the Rev. Timothy Harris took up his abode among them, remaining pastor for fourteen years. From the log school-house the church graduated into a frame structure in 1810, and from this into a regular sanctuary of goodly proportions supplied with porch, pews, galleries, steeple and bell! The further story, though of thrilling interest, must be passed by. Suffice it to say that all the good things civil, social, intellectual and religious which New England so abundantly produces, were here possessed and diffused far abroad on every side. And it is therefore only the more lamentable, and inconsequent, and utterly out of place when, by a decisive vote of sixty-three to eleven, these doughty sons and daughters of the Pilgrims turned their backs upon their ecclesiastical ancestry and entered the Presbyterian fellowship!!

Around Granville, in the same county, about fifty years since quite a cluster of Congregational churches were formed, most of which have since perished. In 1839 Rev. Jacob Little, nearly forty years pastor at Granville, wrote naming these five in the order of their organization: St. Albans, Hartford, Burlington, Bennington and McKean. In later times all these, one after another, have disappeared from our lists. Bnt over against this disheartening reminiscence it is pleasant to recall that in the counties covering the central portion of the state we now have two conferences, containing together more than forty churches, some of them among our largest and most vigorous, which have not yet begun to suspect that Congregationalism is other than most excellent both in theory and practice, in principles, methods and results, upon the individual character, and upon society at large.

III. THE WESTERN RESERVE.

Though comprising no considerable portion of the area of the state, this section for various cogent reasons deserves a prominent place in the history of Congregationalism in Ohio. For outside of New England no region of equal extent can be named which so closely resembles New England at so many characteristic points. The population to an unusual degree is homogeneous and of Puritan ancestry. Its twelve counties hold three-fifths of the churches of our order, and about one-half of the membership, leaving the minority thinly scattered abroad through the other seventy-six counties. To make a comparison (not meant to be odious in the least) with a denomination which in social, intellectual and spiritual qualities most nearly resembles us, and with which therefore we are most likely to come into competition, on the Reserve, according to the census of 1890, we outnumber the Presbyterians two to one in communicants, and in churches three to one. In two counties no Presbyterian church has an existence, and in each of three others but a single one. The metropolitan city of northern Ohio stands third in this country for the number of Congregational churches, being surpassed only by Chicago and Boston. The Reserve holds a village community of upwards of 4,000 and two Congregational churches, one ranking fifth for size among our entire American sisterhood, and together having a membership of over 2,000.

As we have seen, it is just a hundred years since the first company of emigrants from Connecticut crossed the Pennsylvania border to build homes and open farms in this the *ultima Thule* of the time. The Indian wars were but recently closed, the distance from civilization was great, and the task of making the journey tremendous, so that several years passed before the settlers numbered more than a few hundreds, while these were located in little groups separated

by long stretches of pathless woods. The first missionary who sought them out and began to hold religious services was Rev. Joseph Badger, sent hither by the Connecticut Missionary Society in 1800. For six years this man of truly apostolic gifts and graces went back and forth, here and there, wherever log cabins had been built, ministering without stint to the spiritual needs of all. The first winter was spent in and about Youngstown, Vienna, Hartford, Warren, etc, in Mahoning and Trumbull counties, the next summer he made his way as far west as Sandusky, and late in October organized the first Congregational church in "New Connecticut" at Austinburg. Early in September of 1802 another church followed at Hudson, some fifty miles away to the southwest, and the next year two more, at Hartford and Warren. In 1800, only 1,144 settlers were to be found east of the Cuyahoga, while beyond that stream the Indians were in full possession. At first Mr. Badger had only Rev. Wm. Wick, a Presbyterian, for companion and fellow helper, but late in 1801 came Rev. Ezekiel Chapman, to remain but a twelvemonth, and in the autumn of 1803 Rev. Thomas Robbins arrived. By 1810 the population of the Reserve had increased to 16,000, and the number of churches, counting only those which remain to us, had increased to nine, organized in the following order: Canfield, Burton, Aurora, Hampden, Geneva and Tallmadge. In the meantime the precious Plan of Union had been contrived and put into operation, whereby the two denominations concerned went into partnership in the matter of planting and watering religious institutions in the nascent Great West. The Connecticut Missionary Society and the General Assembly were to co-operate in a way strictly fraternal, and impartial, and unselfish for the greater glory of God and well-being of men. But, unfortunately for the furtherance of New England ecclesiastical ideas and practices, it came to pass that during the six years preceding 1812, the formative period of the infant organizations, while

the missionary money was derived mainly from Connecticut, the missionaries were almost wholly from Pennsylvania, so conveniently near at hand, and made of sturdiest Scotch-Irish Presbyterian stuff. The Presbyterian governing bodies were also within delightfully easy reach, with demoralizing results to Congregationalism, of which mention will be made on later pages.

The second decade of the century brought re-inforcements of ministers much more generally of New England birth and training, and among them such honored names as Thomas Barr, Harvey Coe, Joseph Treat, G. H. Cowles, John Seward, Simeon Woodruff, William Hanford, Caleb Pitkin, Luther Humphrey, Alvan Coe, Lot B. Sullivan and Alfred H. Betts, who survived till the close of this primitive period, wrought righteousness, endured hardness as good soldiers, and made notable achievements in laying well the foundations of the Kingdom. By 1810 the Reserve west of the Cuyahoga was open for settlement, and population began to pour into the Firelands at the western extremity. Entrance was becoming common by water from Buffalo, thanks to the steamboat, and the Erie Canal was under way. Of course the towns bordering on Lake Erie were easiest of access, the several gravel ridges which parallel the lake were highly prized and selected for occupation by the earliest comers, while the southern borders of the Reserve were left as mere habitations for deer, bears and wild turkeys until the thirties were at the doors. By 1820 the churches, reckoning only those still on our rolls, had increased from nine to forty-two. The first eight which belong to the second decade are all east of the Cuyahoga: Painesville, Rootstown, Charlestown, Windham, Mantua, Nelson, Johnsonville, and North Madison. Brecksville, across that stream, follows in 1816, and after West Williamsfield and Bristolville, formed about the same time, come Lyme far west in Huron county, and Lodi in Medina county, some forty miles

back from the lake and on the divide beyond which the streams flow to the Ohio. Others follow in this order: Mesopotamia and Strongsville in the same year with the last named, Atwater, Croton, Huntsburg, Richfield, Sheffield, Vermillion and West Andover, all in 1818. During the next year no less than eleven churches were organized, a number surpassed only once, and in 1834 which gave origin to twelve. These are their names: Brooklyn Village, Brunswick, Chester, Conneaut, Kent, Kirtland, Medina, Rock Creek, Fitchville, Sandusky and Vermillion, the last three formed between May 23 and June 10 by Rev. John Seward and Rev. Joseph Treat, missionaries of the Connecticut Missionary Society, while on a horseback tour through the almost uninhabited woods of the extreme frontier.

Twenty-two churches date from the third decade, of which Belpre, on the Ohio, is one, nine were located in the western half of the Reserve, among them Elyria and Wellington, and twelve in the eastern half. The fourth decade leads all others to date in our history, since it increased our sisterhood by no less than thirty-eight, not all, however in the region now specially under view. Those were booming times for the state. The Erie Canal was completed, the Ohio canal system was finished or well under way, the population advanced some 600,000, and the financial craze was on which ended in the collapse of 1837. Cleveland First, Mansfield and Oberlin began their career, while in the limited region now covered by Medina Conference no less than ten churches were organized, and also the first one in the Toledo region, Plain Church, located in Wood county, a few miles from Bowling Green.

IV. IN NEWEST OHIO.

Although in this portion of the state fourteen of our churches are located, and some of them take rank among the first for size, financial ability and abundance of good

works, yet a few words concerning them will well suffice here, and indeed the events connected with their history belong almost altogether to a later period. As we have just seen, the eldest of them all dates only from 1835, and but a few months since was celebrating its sixtieth anniversary. When Marietta was making ready for her semi-centennial, Toledo was just casting off her swaddling clothes, having only in 1833 attained to a name. Seven years later her inhabitants numbered no more than 1,224, and in 1850, 3,829 were the figures. In 1830 this newest Ohio contained eight counties whose aggregate population was only 2,679, an average of 335, five of them having less than 300 each, and one, Van Wert, only 49. By the end of the decade, however, the census showed an advance to 38,462, or more than fourteen-fold. In order to explain this phenomenon it is only necessary to recall such facts as these: Until 1818 the area now covered by more than twenty counties, and more than 7,000 square miles in extent, or about one-sixth of the entire state, was still owned and occupied by various Indian tribes. Until after the peace of 1815, Indian hostilities were often threatened from this quarter. Then this same frontier region held the flat, low-lying Black Swamp, of evil name, about 120 miles by 40, nearly the size of Connecticut, covering the valley of the lower Sandusky, of the Portage, and the streams which flow into the Maumee from the south, like the Auglaize. The forests were most dense and shut out the sun, while during the bulk of the year the ooze was so deep as to make travel impossible. Excepting certain roomy reservations, this section was open for settlement in 1820, though the fifth decade of the century had arrived before 700 Wyandots, the last remnant of the red men, took their final departure. Still further, the financial crash of '37 delayed the beginning of rapid immigration. And finally, the relative dearth of Congregational churches may be explained by suggesting that the pioneers of northwestern Ohio

to a large extent were of German birth, or else of Teutonic stock which, while *en route* for a terrestial paradise, halted for some generations in Pennsylvania; and that our ecclesiastical fathers of fifty years since held religiously to the idea that only New England Yankees were fit to possess the church polity of the Pilgrims, and only such were thought of as eligible to fellowship with us. Of our sixteen churches composing the Toledo Conference five date from the forties; West Mill Grove having been organized in 1843, Sylvania and Toledo First in the year following (the latter, though Congregational always, yet reposing in the bosom of Presbytery until within five years), Ridgeville Corners in 1846, Toledo Second in 1849.

THOSE DAYS OF HOMESPUN.

It is next to impossible for us of this generation to reproduce in imagination the environment, material and spiritual, in the midst of which the men and women passed their lives whose laborious, but exalted task it was to lay in this great commonwealth the foundations of the Kingdom of God. What exhausting toil, what endurance of evil, and what deprivation of comfort and privilege. Dearth of resources to the verge of poverty, loneliness and frequent sickness, but the old home so far away. Let these few specifications stand for the entire trying situation. The omnipresent forest, with wild game abounding. Roads scarcely more than trails, or blazed paths, with travel on foot, on horseback, or in ox-carts. To be sure, the canal was here or soon to arrive, and the locomotive was actually tugging and screaming over twelve miles of railway. The rude log cabin universal, whether for dwelling, school or place of worship, and the fireplace the only resource for heat. And this other fact: throughout all these 40,000 square miles of frontier territory the population was next to wholly rural, and plebeian, and provincial down to the end of the thirties. Of

cities there were next to none, while the villages of any considerable size were few and far between. Cincinnati was the proud Queen City of the West, boasting of 29,000 in '30, and of 35,000 in '37. Next came Cleveland, but with a vast space between, mustering a brave 500 at the end of a generation after the first settler arrived, doubling that figure by 1830, and fifty years after the birth of Marietta becoming the lordly possessor of 7,000. Columbus was incorporated in 1834, and three years after had 5,000 inhabitants. Dayton followed with 4,000, Mansfield, with 350 houses, had reached 2,000, thus standing on a par with Toledo(!). Within the limits of Akron dwelt 1,600, Marietta's population of 1,200 dwelt in 180 houses, Elyria was "safely estimated" at 700, in 80-100 dwellings, Ashtabula at 600, while Medina is credited with 50 families, and 20-30 edifices looming up in the near future. Such was the Ohio of about sixty years ago.

THE MISCHIEVOUS PLAN OF UNION.

We come now to the consideration of an event, a transaction, which to Congregationalism is of nothing less than first-class importance, and whether for the variety, the extent, or the permanence of the results produced. And unfortunately for our Israel the outcome was mainly evil. Nor was the damage confined to this state, but extended far beyond our border, and appears especially in New York, Michigan, Illinois and Wisconsin.* By the time churches began to spring up in the trans-Mississippi region the evils of the Plan had become so patent and so past endurance that its provisions were left in innocuous desuetude by those

*The case of Wisconsin was peculiar. The attempt was made there, not to amalgamate the two denominations concerned, but only to place them in fraternal conjunction and fellowship in a state Presbyterian-and-Congregaitonal Convention.

whose ecclesiastical goings forth were from Plymouth Rock. The famous document follows, which stands, not indeed for the "first disobedience" of the remarkably wise and good New England Puritans, nor quite the cause of "all our woe," but certainly was attended by the loss of our Eden in the older Northern States:

"A Plan of Union between Presbyterians and Congregationalists in the New Settlements, adopted in 1801.

'Regulations adopted by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America, and by the General Association of the State of Connecticut (provided said Association agree to them), with a view to prevent alienation and promote union and harmony in those new settlements which are composed of inhabitants from those bodies.

1. It is strictly enjoined on all their missionaries to the new settlements, to endeavor, by all proper means, to promote mutual forbearance and accommodation, between those inhabitants of the new settlements who hold the Presbyterian and those who hold the Congregational form of church government.

2. If in the new settlements, any church of the Congregational order shall settle a minister of the Presbyterian order, that church may, if they choose, still conduct their discipline according to Congregational principles, settling their difficulties among themselves, or by a council mutually agreed upon for that purpose But if any difficulty shall exist between the minister and the church, or any member of it, it shall be referred to the presbytery to which the minister shall belong, provided both parties agree to it; if not, to a council consisting of an equal number of Presbyterians and Congregationalists, agreed upon by both parties.

3. If a Presbyterian Church shall settle a minister of Congregational principles, that church may still conduct their discipline according to Presbyterian principles; excepting that if a difficulty arise between him and his church, or any member of it, the cause shall be tried by the Association, to which the said minister shall belong, provided both parties agree to it; otherwise by a council, one-half Congregationalists and the other half Presbyterians, mutually agreed on by the parties.

4. If any congregation consist partly of those who hold the Congregational form of discipline, and partly of those who hold the Presbyterian form; we recommend to both parties, that this be no obstruction to their uniting in one church and settling a minister; and that in this case, the church choose a standing committee from the communicants of said church, whose business it shall be, to call to account every member of the church, who shall conduct himself inconsistently with the laws of christianity, and to give judgment on such conduct, and if the person condemned by their judgment be a Presbyterian, he shall have liberty to appeal to the presbytery; if a Congregational-

ist, he shall have liberty to appeal to the body of the male communicants of the church. In the former case, the determination of the presbytery shall be final, unless the church consent to a further appeal to the synod, or to the General Assembly; and in the latter case, if the party condemned, shall wish for a trial by a mutual council, the cause shall be referred to such council. And provided the said standing committee of any church shall depute one of themselves to attend the presbytery, he may have the same right to sit and act in the presbytery, as a ruling elder of the Presbyterian Church.'"

HOW THE PLAN CAME TO BE.

Of course, this well meant, but exceedingly ill-advised, scheme for Christian union and co-operation did not spring up by accident and of a sudden, but was rather the last step in a series of causal forces. For example, in that generation a quite general movement was in progress, both in the New World and in the Old, looking to the intimate affiliation of sundry Protestant bodies in various forms of missionary work at home and abroad. The London Missionary Society, formed in 1795, at first included Churchmen, Wesleyans, Presbyterians and Independents. When all these came together in a great assembly and found themselves of one heart and mind, the spectacle was so novel and inspiring that the tide of noble enthusiasm rose and swelled and overflowed, and one brother in his ecstasy declared that the funeral of bigotry was being celebrated then and there! On this side of the Atlantic the American Board and a half score of union societies were another portion of the outcome. But as far back as 1774, Ezra Stiles and Samuel Hopkins, New England Congregationalists both, laid before the Synod of New York and the Scottish General Assembly a proposition looking to co-operation in sending certain missionaries to Africa, which but for the Revolution would have been adopted. Then further, the two denominations, dwelling side by side in several of the colonies, had discovered that at various points they had much in common. Some years before they had entered into friendly ecclesiastical intercourse, which had now developed

to such an extent that delegates appointed by either to visit the gatherings of the other were received to full membership *even to voting power*. Besides, of late in the presence of antagonists dreaded by both, to wit, Episcopacy and Unitarianism, they had come closer together for mutual defence. And, what constitutes the feature of their case for which they ought to have been most ashamed, the Connecticut saints of that time, under the Standing Order and the Saybrook Platform had lost all faith in the fitness of the common people in the churches to think and decide for themselves, and hence a demand that a "strong government" must be maintained through consociations and the dominance of the clergy. In other words, the Congregationalists who helped to father the Plan were themselves semi-Presbyterian. In 1799 a part of them had as good as renounced the Congregational name. Even to this day in some quarters of Connecticut our churches are commonly known as Presbyterian. And right here lies the very head and front of their offending, that they were false to the fundamental principles of their church polity.

In excuse for the part played in this lamentable affair by the General Association it should be remembered that when missionary zeal took shape in the provisions of the Plan, this phase of evangelizing effort was yet in its infancy. Vermont and Eastern New York had but just begun to cry for help. The need of raising money and sending men to the frontier had suddenly risen to proportions unanticipated and appalling. There were no adequate precedents to guide in the most pressing emergency. Something must be done, and that quickly, for the thousands of their kindred perishing in spiritual destitution in the wilderness. Under the circumstances it could hardly be expected that they should plan calmly and with the prescience of statesmen. Their gaze, not strangely, was fixed upon the mere present and the immediate future. What marvels of growth and achievement the

closing decade of the nineteenth century was destined to behold throughout the imperial area of our Republic was hidden wholly from their gaze, just as it was also from that of the most sagacious and far-seeing of their contemporaries. When Jefferson could affirm that the space between the Atlantic and the Mississippi would doubtless afford ample room for all our population for *at least five hundred years*, we need not be surprised that the plain preachers and laymen who united to fashion a plan for the conduct of home missions, set one on foot which while well enough for days of pioneering, with settlements small and scattered, the population limited and removed but a step from poverty, would utterly break down and work grievous mischief when communities large and strong had come into existence. But all the same, the fathers ate sour grapes and the children's teeth were set on edge. The iniquity (blunder, that is, so colossal as almost to constitute a crime) of the fathers is visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation. The final suggestion is that neither one of the high contracting parties to the Plan of Union had as yet attained to any considerable degree of forceful and aggressive denominational consciousness. Connecticut Congregationalists were acting only for themselves. For yet fifty years there was no *American* Congregationalism. And until 1789 Presbyterianism had not advanced beyond the local and provincial stage of the synod and the presbytery.

THE WORKINGS OF THE PLAN.

When the pioneers entered northern Ohio, with few exceptions only two religious classes were represented. Some had emigrated from Pennsylvania, so close at hand, who were Presbyterians and of Scotch-Irish descent. As a matter of course, when in communities composed wholly or mainly of these, churches were organized, the majority shaped the polity according to Presbyterian rules and were

duly provided with ruling elders, session, etc. Of this ecclesiastical type the Youngstown church was the first specimen and, by a few months, seems to have antedated our Austinburg organization. But in almost all quarters of the Reserve the case was different. The population was derived mainly from Connecticut or her neighbor states, so that no doubt of those who sought church fellowship, with occasional exceptions, from three-fifths to four-fifths were Congregational in sentiment. Therefore naturally it came to pass that in many cases churches were formed upon purely democratic principles, with all authority lodged in the body of the brotherhood, and all important questions settled in public by discussion and a majority vote. But just about as often it occurred that preference and conviction as to church government were found widely divergent in the same company of disciples. The number of Pennamites and of Pilgrims might be nearly equal, or on the one side was the heavier vote, while on the other were a few determined and persistent spirits who would scheme day and night to have things ecclesiastical fashioned according to their ideas. As a result of this condition which occurred in scores of cases, divers compromises were contrived which resulted in a class of churches neither Congregational nor Presbyterian in form, but a mixture of both. Here evidently, with human nature as commonly constituted, were supplied in rich abundance opportunity and provocation for endless debate and unseemly strife. The mere denominational name was something of importance. Now ruling elders would be appointed and ordained, or a standing committee to rule with the pastor, and later after long agitation and much bitter feeling, a revolution would occur with only plain deacons to care for the spiritualities. Several churches can be named which changed their internal polity a half dozen times in a generation and in the end were found in an almost hopeless state of exhaustion.

Then it soon became evident that some form of association must be provided, both for fellowship and for co-operation in good works. The Plan in anticipation of this need made express mention of such bodies as both parties to the contract were familiar with. A majority of the male members should vote to be "under the care" of either Presbytery or Association. But, behold! while the latter were far away in the East and over the Alleghenies, the former were standing with open doors just across the Pennsylvania line, with bounds able to hold the entire Northwest if need be! Redstone Presbytery was created in 1781, from it the northern portion was separated in 1793, forming Ohio Presbytery, out of which also Erie Presbytery was carved in 1801 with Eastern Ohio under its jurisdiction. Hartford Presbytery followed in 1808 commissioned especially to safeguard the kingdom on the Reserve, some of whose ministers were transferred from Erie. Mr. Badger had early connected himself with presbytery. In 1805 a few ministers and churches desiring some sort of affiliation and communion had ventured to organize the Ecclesiastical Convention of New Connecticut, which held several meetings. But then, as if conscience-smitten, or fallen from the grace of faith in the Congregational way, they asked the Hartford judicature to take their weakling under the protection of its mighty arm. Which thing was duly done, and for long years we hear no more of Congregationalism in these parts, except as it appears in the life of the individual churches. *Facilis decensus Averni:* The fashion soon became fixed and universal for our churches to join presbytery at once, in all humility and obedience receiving therefrom creed, covenant and rules of practice. It was common for a committee of presbytery to be sent to constitute the new body. Delegates were dispatched to sessions of presbytery, bearing also the records to be examined. They must meekly receive counsel or reproof, make reports as to their growth and condition,

pay their *pro rata* share of the commissioners' fund to the General Assembly, and in the annual report of the Presbyterian Church the names of all these Congregational bodies appeared regularly as forming a constituent part!! And worst of all, it at length came to pass that Congregational churches could *neither call nor dismiss pastors without first securing the consent of presbytery!!* So far from gospel liberty had our churches lapsed. And too many rejoiced to bear this yoke of bondage.

Then as to the working of the Plan on the clerical side. They also were to connect themselves at their pleasure with presbytery or association, and which of the two was a matter of indifference. But it came out that ministers from New England were so complaisant, so accommodating, or so lacking in either conviction and sound discretion that, instead of creating their own organizations, they simply dropped into such as they found already at hand, presbyteries to wit.* And then also, from 1806 to 1812 the ministerial supply from the East almost wholly failed. During one period the Connecticut Society had but a single representative upon the Reserve, while Pennsylvania Presbyterian preachers were sent in to occupy the needy field. All these had a horror of the "irregularities" and the "looseness" of Congregationalism, believed unquestionably in a "strong church government," and had the courage of their convictions. Nor was their faith without works to match. Rev. Thomas Barr is the most conspicuous specimen, and let his *chef d'oeuvre* belonging to a most critical and decisive occasion, set forth the serious disadvantage under which our polity labored when brought into unnatural conjunction and entanglement with other ecclesiastical organizations. Church history contains not many spicier or more suggestive passages than are supplied in the story of the transaction writ-

* Prof. Henry Cowles, an unimpeachable authority, affirms that "for thirty years almost every minister was drawn into the Presbyterian church."

ten by the chief actor himself. In 1814 the time had come to form some sort of a body upon the Reserve in which the churches, now become quite numerous, could be associated. By this time also Congregationalism had risen to a clear preponderance, and the general judgment was that an association should be established. In fact Mr. Barr stood well nigh alone in thinking differently. But when the hour for final decision arrived so strenuous was he, so affectingly did he plead his case, that the Yankees succumbed to the last man.* At first a compromise was attempted and the "Consociated Presbytery of New Connecticut" was contrived. But when the Synod of Pittsburgh was asked to recognize this unheard of ecclesiastical creature a refusal was sent back (Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?), and as a result a Congregationalized kind of establishment was set up known as Grand River Presbytery, which was divided in 1818, a part becoming the Presbytery of Portage, from this latter Huron was set off in 1823, and finally two years later the pile was made complete by the organization of the Synod of the Western Reserve. As for the ministers, some presently came to prefer a system which gave them station and authority above the brethren. And in after years when from various causes the Congregational name without sufficient reason came to be a synonym for heresy and manifold follies, for mere reputation's sake, and to avoid suspicion, not a few clung more closely to presbytery.

At first and all along it had been so that the Plan failed to find universal favor from New England immigrants to

*We find the same spirit displayed on both sides up in Michigan when a score or so were to have a church formed composed of Congregationalists with but a single exception, but notwithstanding, out of the process by some magic Presbyterian it came. Again in Ohio a similar minority of one, and a woman at that, with tears and prayers wrought the same phenomenal result. All which recalls the deed of the historic Hibernian, who bringing into camp as prisoners a baker's dozen of the foe and asked to explain the *modus operandi*, replied that he had simply surrounded them and so compelled surrender.

Ohio. In no narrow, bigoted, sectarian spirit, they loved the popular type of gospel rule to which they had from childhood been accustomed, and brought no disposition to exchange it for another less liberal and more cumbered with legal rules and precedents. Many accepted the disagreeable situation because they had been told and believed it was but a makeshift which would soon have its day and cease to be. The tide setting towards presbytery, however, rose so high as to be exceedingly hard to stem. But when in the thirties dissatisfaction with the operation of the existing ecclesiastical *regime* had become quite general, and here and there a church determined to break away from outside dictation and manage its own concerns according to its own judgment and convictions, yet another and hitherto unsuspected element of the Plan came to light. It was sufficiently easy to enter in, but it was now found to be oftentimes a most serious matter to undertake to depart. For the former a majority vote of the church would suffice, but the ruling was laid down by the presbyteries that only by a vote which was unanimous could the church withdraw. A handful, a minority of one, would be recognized as the original body. And when majorities would protest against such tyranny, the outcome would be division, and two warring bodies in the same locality. Cases like this occurred on the Reserve by the dozen. Some churches faced death rather than remain, and others died in the effort to escape, while still others, formed in later years, taking warning by what their neighbors had suffered, refused to unite with any organization, and stood aloof in isolation. Bear in mind, it was a plan of "Union," and behold its fruits. After a generation had passed the territory under view contained Plan of Union churches in quite large numbers, and all these others besides: Free Congregational, Union Congregational, Orthodox Congregational, Evangelical Congregational, Free Independent Congregational, Presbyterian-Congregational, Free

Presbyterian; and as if these were not enough, Independent Presbyterian also. It is difficult indeed to see how in the absence of the Plan evils half so many or so great could have befel. This appears to have stood for the highest wisdom to be mustered from the combined heart and brain of two denominations in the opening decade of the century; it is fervently to be hoped that we their sons in the closing decade, in planning for the maintenance and spread of the Gospel in our land, will not be left of heaven to contrive any scheme which shall be productive of results more disastrous.

TIMES OF TEMPEST.

We enter now upon the second period of our denominational history in the state, of which the forties constitute the central portion, though the decade preceding and the one following are included. The herculean task of felling the forests, subduing the soil, of laying the foundations of all manner of institutions, political, social and religious, was now largely completed. This commonwealth was just about to make the perilous transition from early youth to the stalwart vigor and achievement of adult years. In order to understand the manifold besetments of our churches it is necessary to recall that this same portion of the century is easily the most remarkable period in American history. At least for intense and universal uneasiness, excitement, agitation, and overturning, and that in every realm of thought and action. The nation had just attained to phenomenal bigness by the annexation of Texas and other northern states of Mexico, California included, and by establishing our claim to Oregon had secured an empire beyond the Rockies. Then followed the joyous and most exhilarating assurance of national greatness in store, a future majestic and sublime of which the fathers had never dreamed. A swelling tide of humanity

was pouring into the Mississippi Valley and pushing towards the western sea. Democracy had now become a most palpable fact. The people verily held the seat of supreme power. Multitudes went wild over financial speculations. An intellectual new birth occurred. The American mind was stirred to the depths and seemed to take on new capacities. A surprising transformation came to the national character. Of course much that resulted was crude and inchoate. Costly experiments were tried, not unattended with transgression and folly. It was only through boundless confusion and chaos that old evil things could pass away.

More particularly, in the religious sphere there was endless disorder, and tumult, and bitter strife. Resulting largely from the revivals so extensive and of such tremendous intensity and power, which attended the preaching of evangelists like Finney. Missionary zeal was wondrously quickened, and the spirit of philanthropy. A portentous crop of heresies sprang into life, coarsest counterfeits of the good. It was now that Mormonism entered upon its career so maleficent and monstrous. Reformers were over-abundant and inconveniently active. Every tenth man held a panacea for all human ills. Only follow him and lost Eden would be restored, or better, the blessed millennium would be ushered in. Temperance and anti-slavery now forged to the front, the last for length and breadth, depth and height, fervor and steadily increasing energy far surpassing any other reform of which this country has had knowledge. Differences of doctrine and church polity were developed. Liberals and conservatives, high church and low, strict and loose constructionists entered into fierce debate and struggle for mastery. While some clung desperately to old conceptions and phrases, others at any cost would have a creed which smacked of democracy and nineteenth century convictions. Those therefore were days of wholesale schism and rending asunder. Scarcely a denomination escaped. The Society of Friends split

into orthodox and Hicksite, the Baptists into mission and anti-mission (hard shell), as well as along Mason and Dixon's line. From the Methodists sloughed off the Methodist Protestant, the Wesleyan and the M. E. Church South. It was during this same much afflicted generation that Alexander Campbell diligently sought to turn the theological and ecclesiastical world upside down, while William Miller, going a step further, would be content with nothing less than bringing final catastrophe to the great round world itself, all on strict Scripture principles. A little later the "spirits" began to tip and rap, to peep and mutter, and to bring fearful and wonderful tales from the unseen realm. Finally, as if to cap the climax of confusion and ferment, Oberlin appears upon the scene intense, dead in earnest, aggressive, with the full courage of her convictions, and wielding far and wide an influence unmatched by any other institution in the west. With her pronounced New School doctrine, her "perfectionism" and her uncompromising anti-slavery sentiments, she was a veritable firebrand, and to not a few a wicked and most pernicious troubler of Israel, to be everywhere denounced and if possible to be destroyed. Yes, and Come-outerism then flourished, which called upon the truly elect, that is, those who out-Heroded Herod in their denunciation of slavery, to break loose from the Laodicean churches and form bodies by themselves. And perhaps among the strangest was the church-unionism, which in the interest of fraternity and Christian fellowship would rend churches asunder and establish a new sect!

Only a few examples have been mentioned from the many which are at hand, to help us to appreciate what sore trial to faith and patience our fathers of fifty years since were called to endure. All this terrible stress and strain fell upon the Congregational churches of Ohio, and be it also remembered, while most of them were small and weak, while many were isolated, and none had attained to maturity of

wisdom and spiritual strength. No wonder they suffered severely under such a complication of evils, and that in painfully large numbers they were disheartened at length, were broken to pieces, and overwhelmed gave up the ghost. The story of their sorrows and pains is full of pathos as well as of tragedy. The Plan at various points had proved a Trojan horse to both parties concerned. And the Presbyterians were the first to cry out in protest. Their beloved polity was seriously adulterated by divers Congregational elements. Authority was endangered, and liberty and democracy were becoming rampant. New England was pushing herself in matters of creed and church order at the expense of Scotland. The ministers were alarmingly addicted to New School theology. And these facts played a prominent, if not a ruling part in precipitating the schism and excision of 1837, whereby the Presbyterian Church was rent in twain. Years followed of excited feeling much to the disturbance and demoralization of our churches. And this trial was one which they would have entirely avoided had they not, like poor Dog Tray, been caught in company in which no reputable canine had any business whatsoever to be found.

When with others Western Reserve Synod was cut off and cast out as alien and unworthy, our churches and ministers in considerable numbers were minded at once to withdraw from such perilous partnership; and would have taken their departure but for the pleading of certain New School leaders, and so the greater portion consented to remain yet longer *in limbo*. But a movement had already begun, outside of as well as within Ohio, and was steadily gathering breadth and momentum, which finally brought complete deliverance. It appeared particularly in the organization of state and local bodies of a purely Congregational pattern. New York led off in 1834 with a general association, and Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa and Illinois were not far behind. A denominational consciousness was slowly but surely

coming into being. More and more the churches sundered their relations with presbytery and entered into bodies more congenial, until by 1850 more than half were either associated thus or else were standing in isolation. We have seen how in 1806 the Ecclesiastical Convention of New Connecticut was formed, and the Muskingum Association in 1809, but both being born out of due time, soon perished. No further movement was made until 1834 when at Williamsfield, under the lead of one Tassey, of Pittsburg, the Independent Congregational Union of the Western Reserve began a brief career, reaching the second year an attendance of ten churches. A capital event occurred in 1836, when at Oberlin, after a preliminary meeting at Hudson, was organized the General Association of the Western Reserve with nineteen churches and seventeen ministers, which number was nearly doubled at later meetings. Lorain County Association followed the next year, whose occupation consisted mainly in bestowing ordination upon Oberlin theological students who from most ecclesiastical bodies found slight countenance. Before the close of this decade the Association of Central Ohio appears and leaves faint traces as late as 1845. Marietta Consociation dates from 1841,* and as well the Consociation of Portage and Summit counties. Both of these survived until merged into others and still exist. In 1843 the Association of Northwestern Ohio began to meet and held several sessions. For a season it was thought that Western Reserve Association would supply a bond of union for all our churches. But Oberlin ideas and influence were dominant therein, and Oberlin presently be-

* After the demise of the Muskingum Association the Marietta church joined Athens Presbytery, and remained in it until after the excision of '37, and then moved resolutely for a Congregational organization. But the name chosen indicates the ecclesiastical ideas embodied. It was modeled quite closely after the pattern of the Connecticut consociations, and undertook to guard and regulate the churches, acted as a standing council to install and dismiss pastors, &c., &c.

came a bogy to thousands of good men, a synonym for fanaticism, if not also for iniquity, and so an object of suspicion, of fear and even hate. Several churches which joined it took their departure, and scores of others would sooner stand alone than risk their reputation by entering into such questionable fellowship. So the afflicted sons and daughters of the Pilgrims found themselves grievously shut in between Scylla and Charybdis, the devil and the deep sea.

And thus it came to pass that for nearly a quarter of a century our churches were beset behind and before, from without and within, with scarcely a taste of the blessings of peace. Truly those were days of campaigning in "the wars of the Lord." The sorest trials of later years are as nothing compared with those of half a century since. The only wonder is that the garden of the Lord did not become wholly desolate, that so much of Christian character and life was able to survive such manifold and prolonged strain. Details of indefinite length could easily be given, but with only this very brief and meagre statement in mind, who shall dare say that the Congregational polity is weak, a rope of sand, is not able to endure the wear and tear of excitement and struggle? Our very bitterest pains were vicarious, belonging legitimately not to us but to others, and by them we were tortured and wrenched because through the fault of our fathers we were entangled so wretchedly in an ecclesiastical system containing so many elements so utterly alien to our own.

OBERLIN'S CONTRIBUTION.

Mention has already been made of this institution and community, the spiritual force known by this name, the notable movement which centered in this locality; but as a factor in the development of Congregationalism in Ohio it is of importance altogether too great to be passed by

without a more specific mention. Prof. Williston Walker hesitates not to declare that "the establishment of Oberlin College was a step of the utmost importance for the history" of our denomination in this state. Since this event did not occur until 1833, its influence was not felt until the first period was almost ended. Nor can it be denied that for a season at least it seemed to most to be an exceedingly unwelcome hinderer, and to make confusion worse confounded. A blessing indeed it was, but hidden for the time behind a deep disguise. As early as 1834 a rumbling as of distant thunder is heard from Hudson and Western Reserve College. Oberlin was an intruder, a trespasser, a poacher upon her preserves. The next year a louder outcry was heard when Finney, declining a call to Hudson, cast in his lot with her rival; Lane Seminary also joining her voice because some thirty rebellious students had taken themselves to that preposterous village in the woods of northern Ohio to finish their theological course. Late in 1838 the central branch of the American Education Society, located at Hudson, refused aid to Oberlin students who were preparing for the ministry, for by this time "perfectionism" was taught and lived in Oberlin colony. In '40 Huron Presbytery refused to license, refused even to examine, James H. and F. H. Fairchild, and all because they declined to declare that they did not believe "in the doctrines taught at Oberlin and in their way of doing things." The next year the same body hurled thirteen resolutions at this seat of Satan, closing with the affirmation that no Oberlinite could "consistently call himself a Presbyterian or Congregationalist of the New England stamp," and that it was "inexpedient for the churches to employ ministers known to entertain such sentiments." These outrageous heretics must be ostracised and driven beyond the pale of Christian fellowship. In '41 also appeared a card signed by seven men from the East, all wise and good, testifying that they had attended a commencement in the no-

torious town, and actually discovered nothing to object to, but much to commend. "All are industrious, cherish the spirit of inquiry, and exhibit a pure and elevated morality and piety." In '42 up from Richland Presbytery went to Western Reserve Synod an overture seeking a settlement of the question whether baptism administered by an Oberlinite might be accounted valid. A committee sat upon it and reported that the errors of that body are very great and exceedingly dangerous and corrupting in their tendency. Such ministers should by no means be admitted to orthodox pulpits, " nor should members of such churches be *admitted to communion* unless they renounce their errors and give evidence of *true faith and holiness*." But the validity of baptism does not depend upon the character of the administrator. The synod finally laid the report on the table, on the ground that "Oberlinism was not yet sufficiently developed" to justify a definitive judgment.

As showing how utterly beside themselves multitudes of sensible people were found in those days, we smile as we read how the session of the Fredericktown Presbyterian church, when a member of that body, a student, would join the church of which the arch-heretic was pastor wrote : "We cannot conscientiously recognize the so-called church of Oberlin as a part of the visible church of Christ on account of its exceedingly corrupt doctrines." So they could not grant her a letter. When she left home her character was good. She has been in Oberlin so long they cannot vouch for it now, but they have learned that she "disavows some of the doctrines laid down in the standards of our church."

In '44 a convention of Plan of Union churches was held in Cleveland, to which orthodox Congregational churches were invited, one of whose objects was still further to hedge in this fountain of evil and protect the saints from its pestiferous malaria. Two years later the western Con-

gregationalists met in convention at Michigan City, and again was Oberlin left in outer darkness. Through all this decade it was a common thing both east and west for associations to declaim and warn against the heresy which went forth from Finney, Mahan, Cowles and their fellows. But by the beginning of the fifties the bulk of the odium and fear had disappeared. The explanation of this strange phenomenon is to be sought in such facts as these : Oberlin had no love for the Plan of Union, and stood for Congregationalism pure and simple, while to the colleges at Hudson and Marietta, and Lane Seminary at Cincinnati the Plan was all that could be desired. Again Oberlin was anti-slavery, received colored students, countenanced co-education of the sexes, etc. Radical New School doctrine was also taught there which to conservatives was most pernicious. "Perfectionism" too, was rampant for a season, and to many frightened spirits meant antinomianism and immorality. Mr. Finney was the greatest of revivalists and multitudes did not approve of his methods and style of preaching. And the criticism was made more piquant because during the first few years certain fads and hobbies had their day which bordered too closely upon the extreme and irrational.

But if in some respects and for a season Oberlin seemed to be mainly a mischief-maker, this is but the least of her achievement, and is as nothing compared with the positive, varied and most weighty services she has rendered. For ten to fifteen years to some extent she was (often innocently) the occasion of scandal and strife, but for almost half a century her critics have been hard put to it for facts whereon to base their charges, while since the sixties her name has been held in highest honor by all who knew her. To set forth briefly and but in part the benefits derived by our Zion from this source : Oberlin has from the first and all along been true to Congregational principles. Liberty, equality, fraternity, there has been no sinning against these. Democ-

racy, the idea and conviction, not that "I am as good as you," and so am to have my way and prosper at your cost if need be; but this instead, "You are as good as I"; that is, your welfare and moral judgments shall be held sacred like my own. No caste distinctions have been recognized. Black and white, male and female, rich and poor have always met on the common plane of redeemed humanity. All stand on a level, but it is one resulting from a marvelous process of leveling up. As to liberty, freedom of the will has been emphasized both as a theory and a practice. Investigation and discussion have been encouraged to the utmost. A sublime confidence has been reposed in the truth, while if only the light were turned upon them, there has been no fear of error or falsehood. No over-cautious binding of students and teachers by pledges has been in vogue, but good sense and an enlightened conscience have been relied upon. Hunting of heresy has never been at all popular in these parts. That is to say, Oberlin has stood from the first for catholicity of Christian sentiment and sympathy. Only let one possess the spirit of Christ, and manifestly be engaged in doing his work, and it sufficed. The creed of the Oberlin church, and that of the Western Reserve Association were designedly made to minify the differences between Calvinism and Arminianism, and to admit all true followers of the Lord Jesus. As between Old and New School, of course Oberlin pronounced mightily for the latter. Comparatively little was cared for theories, but much for conduct. The well-being of humanity was most precious, and so reform of every kind had a large place in the thought and desire and action of every day life. Oberlin also stood sturdily for spirituality and evangelism. And finally, the founders and builders bestowed all their influence in favor of ecclesiastical organizations fashioned upon purely Congregational principles.* It may

*Writing in 1863 Prof. Henry Cowles testifies: The Oberlin theological alumni have stood up a noble phalanx for the polity of the New Testament

be at the outset only making a virtue of necessity, for presbytery and Plan were antagonistic to the upstart institution. Churches were closed against its teachings, and license and ordination were impossible. But, whatever the impulse, the motive, all the same Oberlin did much to bring the Plan to abolition.

But how were these convictions and this spiritual force brought to bear upon the churches of the state so as to affect them in any considerable degree? And especially when so generally the very name was hateful and odious, a by-word and hissing? In replying to this pertinent question we must recall that the work undertaken and carried on with amazing energy was in several respects altogether unique. In the institution were included various departments adapted to almost every grade of intellectual development. It was a people's college, with a preparatory department below and a theological seminary above, and women were welcome as well as men. The special object to be furthered, as selected by the founder, was preparation of ministers and teachers for their exalted tasks. And almost at once youths of both sexes began to come by hundreds and by thousands, and who to a great extent were residents of Ohio. The demand for trained teachers was in those days very great. The long vacation was placed in the winter months, and at its beginning out hastened the would-be pedagogues, north, south, east, west, by wagon loads and stage loads, on horseback and on foot; to be gone for months, boarding in the homes, each in close contact with scores of youthful minds and hearts. And somehow it was that for the most part they were so inspired, so filled to overflowing with the Oberlin spirit, which was also the spirit of Congregationalism, that scores on every side were certain to catch the inspiration. Besides, a number of their pupils were sure sooner or later to find

and the Pilgrims. Out of two hundred it would not be easy to find one who has swerved from these good old paths.

their way to the wonderful fountain of learning. Hundreds went out thus every year sowing the good seed, and in the aggregate thousands during the first generation. Scores and hundreds of theological students preached up and down here and there in Ohio, supplying pulpits during their course and afterwards becoming pastors. Churches not a few, some of them among our prominent ones, have never had pastors of other than Oberlin sentiments and training. Then also a steady stream of influence went out from the faculty as they toiled so abundantly on the Sabbath and in revival efforts. Nor must the Oberlin Evangelist be forgotten, which for a quarter of a century made its semi-monthly visit to multitudes of homes and was read with greatest eagerness. Finally, who that ever saw the great congregations for weeks and months together and worshipped with them, could forget the experience? and the remarkable company of the earnest-hearted men and women both in the institution and the community? Though there was no proselyting, though the word was seldom spoken, this was Congregationalism omnipresent, dominant and at its best. No long and hot campaign of open, unblushing propagandism would have been half so successful. Oberlin's part in the spread of our principles and polity from the Lake to the River supplies material for a noble story, which as yet awaits a worthy historian.

PHASES OF EARLY RELIGIOUS LIFE.

It is necessary to suggest at the outset that the setting-forth which follows is based almost exclusively upon the records of the older churches, and hence though truthful so far as it goes, is at the best but a partial, a one-sided, a fragmentary statement of the facts in the case. Only such matters are alluded to as such documents would naturally contain, and it is not from its records that the truest, deepest

life of a church can be reproduced. The aim however has been to call attention only to what was characteristic of the Christian men and women of Ohio during the first half century, and typical of the times. Let it be remembered all along that those were for the most part plain people, pioneers, dwelling on the frontier and in the forest, with society and all manner of institutions in a crude and formative condition. The evidence is abundant that their minds and hearts were often cast in a narrow mold, and that the average life, whether in the intellectual, social or spiritual sphere, was of a grade comparatively low. They possessed an energy which was uncultured and rude, so that their aims were often better than their methods of performance. Therefore we need not be surprised to learn that during the first years of the century even the Yankee saints on the Reserve were beset in revival services by that phenomenal "religious" infliction known as the "Jerks," which originated in the most benighted regions of Kentucky. Scores together would be suddenly seized with trembling, would fall and lie for hours in a trance. The old Puritan spirit long survived, so stiff, solemn and stern, the spirit that is of the Law rather than of the Gospel. Calvinists were they, and orthodox to the backbone, which traits were not softened in the least by the potent influence of presbytery. No toleration was allowed to heresy. A Methodist woman might join a certain church on condition that she swallow the doctrine of election. A brother was kept under the hetchel for two mortal years by a charge of denying the doctrine of the trinity, but was acquitted when it came out that he only denied the existence of three Gods. They had no use in their churches for Mormons, or Universalists, or Perfectionists, or Spiritualists, or Adventists,* or "even so-called Disciples" (Camp-

* Well might the churches fall into a panic when for several years in the eastern part of the Reserve such ravages from Spiritualism were reported, and

bellites). They had great faith in the spiritual tonic supplied by days of fasting, humiliation and prayer, and not seldom resorted to the same. On one such occasion the pastor was instructed to formulate a detailed confession of the sins of the church, which also after amendment was adopted by vote and read from the pulpit. They believed heartily in the grace of discipline for church members to bring them back from their derelictions and trespasses, as well as in specific rules and pledges to hold them to the practice of virtue and piety. That is, godliness was to be secured by ecclesiastical statute. Every church joining presbytery was supplied with a copy of certain "Rules of Practice," which set forth authoritatively and in detail what the brethren ought and ought not to do. When one organization had sadly fallen away from faith and good works and found itself in a very evil case, a committee was chosen to contrive a plan whereby it might be returned from its long captivity. And what should be done but bring in a set of *twenty-one resolutions*, lengthy, and containing a bill of particulars which covered the entire moral law, and also every duty to self, to brother man and to God (and would cover several pages of this pamphlet), even to "plainness in dress, and cleanliness and neatness in person," "not to loiter at the door of the sanctuary, and to offer seats to strangers." But in spite of this heroic remedy, not to say because of it, inside of three months that same church had lapsed into a state of worse than semi-somnolence, into a paralysis which lasted for five years, during which no services were held! One church enacted that the congregation should "sit in-

in one church of a hundred members *fifty* were swept away by the excitement.

From another church two women were cut off, of whom one avowed her fixed determination not to live with her husband since she was now living in "the resurrection state," and the other had left her husband, asserting that "she was married to Christ." Later, however, both were restored, and because it was judged they were insane when they said and did such things.

clining forward in prayer and stand while singing, and that all should sing who were able."

And as for church trials, the harvest of them never failed. Here too presbytery made itself felt in bane, by introducing the spirit and methods of the court room. With the New Testament in mind and the life of Jesus, it makes one's flesh creep to read the citations to trial, the charges and specifications. All is unsympathetic, bloodless and cold, and calculated not to soften but to provoke. It was not at all unusual to put the witnesses under oath. The rule was common, Public confession for public offences, and the penitent one must read his confession in the Sunday congregation, except that sometimes the pastor was allowed to perform this function for a female offender. Sentences of excommunication were also read from the pulpit. Immoralities so gross and scandalous as nowadays not to be mentioned in good society, in those primitive days were thus obtruded into the sanctuary. "Breach of covenant" was a common phrase, and included such wickedness ("crimes" was a common term) as absenting one's self from the public services, especially from the communion, together with neglect of secret and family prayer. With such cases the records overflow. It was counted a most serious matter to vow thus and not to keep. Nor was Sabbath-breaking less offensive in their sight.* The Rules of Practice specified traveling, visiting, likewise "the collecting of hay or grain and attending to any part of the business of making sugar," among occupations which should be eschewed upon the day of rest. A certain conscienceless or heedless brother presumed to take a steamboat from Cleveland bound for the west, and later applying for a letter, it was withheld until he should either explain or repent. It staggers our faith in

* When a law was passed compelling postmasters to receive and open Sunday mails, one church forbade any member to accept the office of postmaster, or to take either letters or papers from the office on that day.

the all-around excellence and strength of our fathers to note how common were sins of the flesh like drunkenness and sexual immorality. With this fact in mind it is not easy to resist the conviction that the present generation is less under the dominion of animal appetites than were the generations which laid the foundations for our Zion. And one's faith is fearfully shaken in the value to religion of church trials as too often conducted. The records indicate that the weak and erring were oftener simply made worse by being set upon and taken to task in a formal and public way, and that about as often as otherwise one trial led to a second and that to a third, or to a long succession, by which churches were shattered and brought to ruin.

Dancing was a standing cause of trouble. One winter an entire county went fairly wild over sleigh riding so that the preachers were compelled to cry out in exhortation and warning. One brother, deacon that he was, confessed that he had imbibed too freely of cider, which through the coöperation of the tobacco in which also he had indulged, caused him to stagger and his tongue to wag in silly talk. His career ended in excommunication. In '38–9, during the course of the "Patriot War," another who was a justice of the peace, visited Canadian soil with hostile intent, suffering also some Government arms to be purloined for the same purpose. Nor had he refrained from attendance at a ball which held at a tavern, being thus in alarmingly close proximity to liquor, had lasted well nigh till break of day. Of course he was taken to task, but strangely was cleared, the evidence going to show that he meant no evil. It was in Oberlin and in the days of the "Covenant," that a trial ensued from drinking tea in contravention of the terms of that document. A woman was accused to the Church by her husband of these three offences: (a) She was cold towards him; (b) she refused to get his supper, especially on one occasion, and (c) she also refused to wash his trousers. She

was *not* convicted. One was charged with wetting his hay before selling it, and another of grossly over-charging his pastor for a quarter of beef, and, as was proper, the rogue was compelled to disgorge at the rate of half a cent per pound. Perhaps the most notable verdict on record was rendered when a church *fined* a member $1.00 for picking up chesnuts, presumably upon his neighbor's land.

The status of women and children affords a fair test of the quality of a civilization. Our fathers seem to have had a grudge against the weaker sex, perhaps on account of the unhappy part played by it in the far-off Eden. At least, in the religious realm the sisters were relegated to the background. The famous Plan settled it that only "to the body of the male communicants" should an aggrieved church member appeal from the judgment of the standing committee. In the churches there was no uniform practice as to female suffrage. Probably in most cases the men alone were expected to vote on important questions. In one case several discussions were held upon the eligibility of womankind, and the matter was laid on the table as a question too tough to be mastered. But in another case it was given out that on a certain weighty subject they *must* vote. Again, a company of them were excused from voting because of scruples in their own minds as to whether it would be proper for them to drop the ballot or show the hand. And one of the rules of practice ordained that "when circumstances do not render it improper, female heads of families should read the Scriptures and pray in their families." As to children, the churches had little place for them, at least in their membership. They were to be baptized, and trained in the homes, disciplined freely with the rod, and duly catechized, and then—why, wait for an "experience." It was laid down in the Rules that parents should "govern and restrain, and direct them by parental authority to attend, whenever circumstaces will permit, catechetical lectures whenever appointed

by the pastor or the church." Moreover, "parents, and others who are members of the church having the care of baptized children, shall be accountable for their religious instruction and government, and for any evident neglect of their duty shall be as liable to discipline as for any offence whatever." As late as the fifties one church voted to purchase catechisms enough to supply every family, and later sent off an order for eight dozen. And yet, somehow, that church did not greatly prosper. But so rarely were persons of tender years received into the churches that one clerk made mention of the notable fact that a number of children wished to join and one was voted in; and later that a boy of ten presented himself, and a youth of thirteen.

There is no space to speak at all at length of the tug our churches had in endeavoring to inaugurate various reforms. Of course anti-slavery was one which created most of a stir, and scarcely a book of records can be found that does not contain ample evidence that Ohio Congregationalism was never unsound at this point. Temperance caused more of a struggle, but presently became as prevalent. As early as '27 Painesville adopted resolutions against ardent spirits, and Fitchville in '34 voted itself a "temperance church." Some churches introduced a pledge into the covenant, though many others hesitated about going so far. It is evident that need there was of calling a halt upon the drinking customs of the time. In Strongsville in '33 it was decided "that for brethren to treat electors with ardent spirits in consideration of their voting for them for some civil office, shall be considered a breach of Christian duty and an offence deserving of discipline." When Charlestown was about to build its first sanctuary a barrel of whisky was promised towards it on certain conditions. "Moral reform" in the forties meant what social purity means to us, and excited deep interest. The regular distribution of tracts was held in high honor in some parts. Divers churches were

puzzled to know if agents soliciting for the various benevolent societies should be tolerated, and not a few decided not to countenance their visits. One church decided to hear no more sermons read from the Oberlin Evangelist, but later repented and was again edified thereby. The indications are various that too often the service of song was in a deplorable case. One of the Rules of Practice recommends to "heads of families that singing of praises to God, when it can be performed with propriety, be considered a part of family worship." Instruments were wanting, while books and knowledge of music were also about as conspicuous by their absence. This is easily however the most forlorn case at hand. A Sunday-school in Huron county actually survived to the end of a long summer term with *one tune only*, to-wit, "Balerma," raised aloft in praise, and likewise a solitary hymn, namely, "Alas, and did my Saviour bleed?" As standing for straitened conditions of another sort, when a new pastor was called to a community which shall be nameless, it was voted "to allow him the privilege of boarding *promiscuously* with the members for one year." Prayer followed immediately, as was most becoming after such action.

DAWN OF BETTER DAYS.

With the incoming of the fifties the indications began to multiply on every side that the worst was over, the force of the tempest was well nigh spent; after a long period of fearful disturbance the elements were settling into equilibrium and quiet, the clouds were scattering and gleams of sunshine began to break through. The material environment of the churches had changed for the better in divers important particulars. Ohio was frontier no longer. The acreage of the farms now much surpassed that of the forests. Even the great ague-smitten region of the Black Swamp in the

northwest had been drained and opened to the healing sunlight. Within a few months of each other three important lines of railroad had been completed; the Cleveland and Pittsburg, the Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati, and the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern, together making communication easy both between the Lake and the River, and also between the East and the West. Thus was it brought about that almost at once the state ceased to be isolated and provincial. The cities and villages began to grow rapidly, a remarkable era of manufacturing set in, and for thousands wealth took the place of a condition in which a somewhat straitened financial condition was the rule. Through increase of travel, books, and newspapers, the average of intelligence was raised substantially. Thus Ohio in more senses than one emerged from the woods. Days ancient and primitive were past, and its population now numbering 2,000,000 had fully completed the momentous passage into Modern Times. A revolution precisely similar was in progress all the land over. The flame of heated passion had largely burned itself out. The public had grown weary of ceaseless warfare and the weapons were worn out. At least theological bitterness had vastly diminished. Every conceivable hobby and ism had had its little hour of noise and glare, numberless absurd theories had been exploded, numberless preposterous schemes had been put into practice and had come to grief, and out of boundless error and falsehood truth and sound sense were steadily emerging. Not a few of the best reforms, like anti-slavery, had attained to popularity, and especially upon the Reserve, could command a majority vote. Moreover, within the denomination itself fundamental changes were working themselves into general acceptance. For example, at the Congregational Convention at Michigan City in '46 the Plan had been sharply criticised as out of date and full of serious mischief as something to be ignored from thenceforth and trampled under

foot. Pure Congregationalism was the best polity possible for the West. And further, western Congregationalists were not at all infected with doctrinal heresy, were really sound to the core, and as such were in every way worthy of the confidence, esteem and affection of their brethren in the East. Meanwhile in most of the states where the denomination possessed any measures of strength general associations had been formed, with district conferences in affiliation, and presently, behold, the startling, and to some, horrifying idea was broached of bringing the messengers of the churches together in a National Gathering!! In the blessed year of grace 1852 such an one was even held in Albany. They came with great hesitation, and suspicion and fear. But no division or conflict occurred. The utmost of harmony prevailed. Each found the other wholly like-hearted, and sufficiently like-minded to be thoroughly loved and fellowshipped as a brother. And how richly and sweetly love flowed forth. How enthusiasm and hope were kindled. The Plan of Union was declared to be abrogated. Then and there, also, significant name, was organized the Congregational Union, a church building society, with the send-off soon of $50,000 for the erection of houses of worship, of which sum Ohio received eventually $8,000. Then it was that for the first time, *two hundred and thirty-two years after the Landing*, the Congregational churches of the United States joined hands to further a denominational object. All the rest followed naturally and in due season, the Boston Council in '65, and then the decision to hold similar gatherings once in three years, not at all for legislation, but only for fellowship, conference and discussion of topics of common interest to all. It was a happy thought, it was verily an inspiration from above, to hold the first of the triennial councils at Oberlin. Both the institution and the community by forty years of plain living, and high thinking, and godly doing, had proved themselves to the satisfaction of all

concerned to be entirely worthy of the high honor. With Oberlin as the hostess the East and West of Congregationalism met for a spiritual feast. And they indeed did "stand on the grave of buried prejudices;" prejudices, too, for which there was no sufficient ground. For shame! It was not until 1871, only twenty-five years ago, that our polity began to have a fair chance to show what it was really worth, what wonders of good achievement for the Kingdom by the blessing of God it was able to work. Hitherto it had but existed, from henceforth it was to lead a life which was life indeed.

In full keeping with what was going on outside was the development within the boundaries of our state. From various causes the Western Reserve Association was moribund. Something like half a dozen local bodies were in existence, but without any coöperation, each going on in its own way, thinking only of its own puny things. In 1852 something like 201 Congregational churches were in existence, while no less than 140 are said to have died since the century opened. Of that number 9 were connected with Marietta Consociation, 14 were scattered throughout the southern and central portions of the state, and 160 were located upon the Western Reserve. Of these 70 belonged to presbytery, and 90 were Independent, "not from principle, but from peculiar circumstances" (evidently according to the well known law that a scalded cat fears cold water). Besides these there were 18 Welsh churches. By far the larger number were small and weak, disheartened and disgusted, indifferent and inclined to suspicion towards their neighbors. As far back as '45 it was noticed that the larger churches, or rather the churches in the larger towns, were mainly Presbyterian. At that date there were only 25 Presbyterian organizations on the Reserve, but they had an average membership of 120, whereas the 147 Congregational churches averaged only 56. The wealthy, the ambitious, those who would move in the

"best society," not unnaturally were content with the ecclesiastical system which was aristocratic in its principles. And especially when on leaving New England they were warned that in the wild west Congregationalism made only for disorder and general demoralization. What could be more deliciously absurd than such facts as these: of the eleven presbyteries upon the Reserve three, namely, Geauga, Medina and Lorain, contained *not a solitary Presbyterian church*, while three others, Erie, Huron, and Portage were able each to muster one. Ashtabula was blessed with two, and Summit with three! In all eight (8) presbyteries together kept pious watch and ward over exactly eight Presbyterian ducklings, but over 98 that were Congregational. And fortunately, at length such anomalies had become too many and too outrageous to be longer borne.* Something radical must be done to mend matters. The question was, Who should lead in the movement looking to unification and coöperation, what body representing and possessing the confidence of the churches should take the initiative. The Western Reserve Association (commonly stigmatized as "Oberlin") was older and larger than any other. When that organization met at Madison, Lake county, in 1850 to hold its fourteenth annual session, the subject was brought up, and the records tell us what action was taken:

The Association proceeded to a free conversation on its affairs and prospects. There was a general impression that the present organization was not meeting the wants of the Reserve, and that some other organization was necessary to unite the growing forces of free polity, and promote the interests of Congregationalism on the Western Reserve. A committee was appointed to report to-morrow on the ways and means to attain these objects, consisting of Bros. Avery, Strieby and Wilcox. The next day the committee reported through Bro. Strieby as follows:

1. Resolved, That in so far as we understand the causes of these di-

*Or as one brother of imaginative make expressed it in metaphor at least emphatic and appropriate, if not wholly elegant: That no longer should "the Congregational cow" so abundantly, and continually, and suspiciously produce "Presbyterian milk." especially cream, and more especially butter!

visions, we do not regard them as being of sufficient importance to keep the Congregationalists of the Reserve in their present state of alienation and separation.

2. Resolved, That we believe thorough Christian investigation and discussion of these causes of offence to be the only means of ascertaining their insignificance and of effecting their removal.

3. Resolved, That as one portion of the Reserve Congregationalists we stand ready to enter into any ecclesiastical organization which, while it unites us with our brethern on a platform of church polity distinctively Congregational and a creed decidedly evangelical, shall yet leave all portions of the body so formed the free exercise of their preferences as to mission boards and benevolent and educational operations in general.

4. That a committee of five be appointed to confer with the leading friends of Congregationalism on the Reserve and in its vicinity, in reference to securing a more perfect union among Congregationalists; and that the committee correspond with said persons on the propriety of calling a convention to promote the interests of Congregationalism.

The committee chosen consisted of the following persons: J. A. Thome, Prof. Morgan, M. E. Strieby, W. B. Brown and A. M. Richardson. The Association adjourned to meet in June of '51, but never met again. Lorain County Association, a sort of local adjunct to the other, lingered on until August of '52, when hearing of a project for an organization to cover Huron and Lorain counties, the clerk was instructed to give letters of dismission to all members, and an adjournment was taken without day. Thus was indirect preparation made to secure an organization which should cover the entire state. The Albany Convention was called for October of '52. But Ohio was first in the field with a convention of her own. How fitting that the venerable mother of Congregationalism in the Northwest should have her name so closely identified with the memorable step now to be taken. The Marietta Consociation was in good and regular standing in all quarters for orthodoxy, conservatism and strict ecclesiastical decorum, and a call from this organization would be most likely to receive a respectful hearing. At the annual meeting held in October of '51 the Consociation displayed an enterprise, not to say ambition, which is

refreshing. The General Association of New York was moving for a national convention, which was held the next year in Albany, and Marietta made bold to invite the Congregational churches of the United States to assemble in the village of that name on the Muskingum. That project came to grief, but not so another relating to similar affairs nearer home. For at the same meeting it was:

> Resolved, That in the view of this Consociation it is desirable that a convention of the friends of Othodox Congregationalism in this state be called to consider and promote the interests of our churches, and that a committee of five be appointed to correspond with the friends of Congregationalism to secure this object, and to appoint such time and place for meeting as may be found expedient.

Three ministers were chosen, Thomas Wickes, William Wakefield and David Gould, and two laymen, A. T. Nye and Douglas Putnam. A circular was sent out to the churches, and the responses were so favorable that in April of '52 a call was issued for a convention of ministers and delegates, to meet June 23 at Mansfield. And so at length the long agony of a full half century of perplexity, aimless wandering, and utterly needless divisions among brethren was nearing the end.

When the meeting assembled it was found that 42 churches were represented by 40 ministers and 33 delegates. One knows not whether to smile or weep to learn that the brethren, saintly men every one, met with fear and trembling, hardly daring to hope for harmony, unity, fraternity; almost taking it for granted that at some point damnable heresy would be unearthed, or some iniquity to be denounced, from which they must withdraw themselves and stand aloof. It was not possible for Marietta and Oberlin to agree upon a creed. But lo, Prof. Henry Cowles, the "perfectionist" and all that, was present at one of the sessions of the committee on creed, and stunning was the amazement when he declared that he had examined the creed of the Marietta Consociation and *could accept it all without any mental res-*

ervation! And so it was from beginning to end. No root of bitterness appeared, no barriers were discovered which need keep them asunder, no reason why they should not from henceforth dwell together as brethren in loving fellowship. Which same blessed thing they then and there undertook to do, by organizing the Congregational Conference of Ohio, whose name in later years was changed to Association. At the first annual meeting the statistical report gave 189 as the number of Congregational churches in the state, of which 147 were on the Reserve, 24 were located south and west of its boundaries, and eighteen were Welsh. Of those upon the Reserve 63 were still sheltered under the wing of presbytery, and 84 were dwelling all unsheltered outside. Beyond the limits of the Reserve only two cared to risk their lives in a "strong" ecclesiastical system.

Escape had been safely made from Egypt, the wilderness great and terrible had largely been left behind, a few cheering glimpses of Canaan had been gained, but Jordan remained to be crossed, or at least the tedious and painful conquest was yet to be made. The golden opportunity had been squandered, the peerless chance to mold a giant commonwealth. By the thousand the "Congregational element" had turned Presbyterian. A whole half century had been lost. Scores of churches had foundered in the stress of the storm. So manifold and so deep-seated were the evils resulting from the Plan of (dis) Union that the lapse of a generation would not suffice to undo them. Quite soon a procession started from presbytery toward the local conferences; but many remained as they were, some from *vis inertiæ*, or mere force of habit, some from choice, and some from fear of greater ills if they wholly identified themsevles with the polity of the Pilgrims. In some cases, also, churches found life in presbytery so comfortable and happy that they had no wish to agitate the matter of leaving, on the princi-

ple of "letting well enough alone." Quite an exodus occurred early in the seventies when General Assembly bade the churches to "perfect their organization," that is, choose between being wholly Presbyterian, and being out-and-out Congregational. But *forty years* actually passed after the meeting in Mansfield before the last of these wandering prodigals came home to receive the robe and ring of the penitent, and to share in the bountiful feast. Then there were scores of another hapless class, those which had had bitter experience of presbyterial ways, and escaping alive went stark mad over Independency. Lonesome and in peril were they, but sympathy neither gave nor sought, and fell into a wretched Ishmaelitish frame. While we pity them, and are not at liberty altogether to excuse their offence, yet it is not strange that a morbid fear was felt as touching ecclesiastical intermeddling and tyranny. A volume would not suffice to tell the story. But these specimen cases, which might be multiplied *ad nauseam* must suffice. Fitchville (to give the Presbyterian side of it), "which had from its origin been a source of annoyance to the body by its disorderly constitution and disorderly conduct, being largely independent of presbytery, was cut off from its relation. A committee, however, was immediately appointed to visit Fitchville and organize a Presbyterian church if deemed expedient." And thus two warring churches were found in a little hamlet. Happily, however, after a troubled life of a dozen years, the latter gave up the ghost. Thompson had been caught in the toils of the Plan, and some who would be delivered from "all higher ecclesiastical bodies which would usurp authority over them," could gain their goal only by forming a "Free and Independent" church. Later the two fragments were brought together. But a few stood out and were organized into a Presbyterian church, which presbytery kept alive for years fighting against fate. In '36 Weymouth exchanged presbytery for Western Reserve Association, but in two

years found associating with Oberlin too bitter a pill and went back. In '45 voted to leave presbytery and stand independent, but failed to get permission. By '48 becomes red hot on anti-slavery and asks the lukewarm presbytery to flee from the Sodom of a pro-slavery General Assembly; and when that body declines so to do, in high dudgeon votes, "we dissolve the relations between that body and this church." Birmingham was formed by a committee of presbytery as the First Presbyterian church and elders were installed (over a church of Congregationalists, be it understood). Later the question arises of leaving presbytery and changing both name and polity, but was voted down. Next, presbytery on an appeal decides against the church and a protest is entered. Before long a vote is carried to change the name, a year after a resolution is lost to withdraw from presbytery, and finally a similar resolution carries *nem. con.* In Williamsfield certain persons ask the church to be dismissed in order to form an independent organization. Are told they may, with the consent of presbytery. That body withholds permission, pronouncing the project "untimely and forever inexpedient." Appeal again to the church, which is at first in doubt, but at length says, Go. In due season asks to say good-bye to presbytery. But cases vastly worse than these were too common. Thus Litchfield voted to withdraw, with a Presbyterian minister as moderator, who declared that those voting thus "were no longer members of the church, and had no right to vote and act with the church." This decision was sanctioned by presbytery at its next session. York church near by, hearing of this gross outrage upon Congregational rights, moved at once to flee from such domination. In Granville when Presbytery began to regulate but one church was found, and when its work was ended there were four, all full of fight, two of them Presbyterian, one Congregational and one Episcopal. Surely a "weak" polity could not match that achievement.

But happily, not much longer were such grievous experiences from such illegitimate causes to be possible. The Minutes of the State Association supply an excellent outline both of the embarrassments still suffered as an inheritance from an unfortunate past, and of the steps of solid and steady progress which began from 1852. Thus in '55 among other things, it was resolved:

That we cordially invite all the Congregational churches in Ohio, which are not now associated with us, to become connected with this body, either directly or through a district conference.

That we deem it eminently conducive to the peace and prosperity of the Congregational churches in Ohio that the ecclesiastical relation of their pastors or stated supplies should be Congregational [hear, hear!]* and therefore affectionately request our churches to urge (if need be) the importance of this connection upon those whom they employ to labor with them in the gospel ministry.

In '57 Puritan Conference reports "twelve churches in connection, and the same number of Congregational churches belonging to presbytery, with four or five independent. Some of these do not unite because they lean towards Presbyterianism; others because they lean towards Independency." And Medina Conference: "Within our bounds are sixteen churches and *fragments of churches*, of which only six are in our connection. Of the others some are averse to coming into our body on account of painful experience in former ecclesiastical connections." In '60 eight local conferences appear as connected with the state body. The statistical secretary "estimates" the Congregational churches to number 250, of which a round 100 are in the Association, 75

*The cogent reason for this earnest counsel is seen in the case of the Plain church which in the sixties had for pastor a stiff and zealous Presbyterian, who one after another organized three Presbyterian churches within a few miles, largely with members from the Plain church, and which but for his manipulation would have been Congregational. Then, with impudence almost sublime, he suggested to the Plain people that being so weak they would better disband and scatter themselves among the three neighboring bodies. To force this result he even put their services at such an inconvenient hour as to make it next to impossible for them to attend.

are connected with presbytery, and 75 are Independent, with a membership of 16,000. He tells of the woes he has endured in the effort to gather statistics from the indifferent, the suspicious, the dogged, and the recalcitrant church clerks and others. They fear him and the Association as being but popes in disguise, and all bristling with designs upon their liberties, for which they will die sooner than surrender. This same exasperated statistician applies the lash right lustily to the clergy and laity of the fifty years just past for their utter self-abnegation and self-stultification which made it possible that "in the annual report for 1859 of the Commissioner of Statistics for the State of Ohio, a report published by state authority, there is not the least notice of a Congregational church within the state, though the commissioner expressly asserts that he gives a table of all the churches and church property." The word Congregational is not found between the covers. Of a truth, such indignation was not at all unrighteous. It is not until '62, and after the churches had been associated for a full decade, that the statistics begin to touch bottom. Tables which are quite satisfactory now begin to meet our gaze. In '67 at the meeting of Association at Columbus 131 churches were represented, and statistics were given from 173, of which 32 were Welsh, and 12 were unassociated. The ministers numbered 130 and the members 13,428. It was during this decade that the Welsh churches, which had stood quite aloof with over-leaning towards Independency, began to affiliate with their American brethren. In '70 first appears Central South Welsh Conference, but not connected until the year following, when Eastern Ohio Welsh Conference was formed.

OUR WELSH CHURCHES.

These bodies of Christians are staunch Congregationalists, and constitute a portion of our fellowship so import-

ant and distinct as to call for a separate and honorable mention. Indeed, the suggestion appears to be quite in order that they are altogether too distinct ; that it would be altogether better both for the cause we have in common, and also for them, if the days should be hastened when all walls of separation would be broken down, and Welsh conferences be heard of no more. The beginnings of Welsh Independency date from the sixteenth century in and from this source was supplied its full quota of confessors and martyrs. One doughty Welshman for conscience sake was clapped into gaol no less than thirteen times. And another attained to immortal fame among Congregationalists, John Penry, a genuine Puritan, who was hanged in 1593, in London, because he would have it that the mind and moral sense of man must be free. The first Welsh church with this free polity was formed in 1639, in Monmouthshire, with others following soon in Cardiff and Swansea. The first considerable immigration of Welsh Congregationalists to this country began near the close of the last century. On a former page mention was made of the early advent of several families into southwestern Ohio, with the Whitewater church, or Paddy's Run, as the outcome. About the same time settlers of the same excellent stock began to lift up their axes against trees in Licking county. They appeared early at Granville, organizing a church in '39, another at Harrison, and a third at Newark in '41. But even before, in 1803, the year in which Paddy's Run was formed, one David Pugh purchased some 4,000 acres in what is now Radnor, Delaware county, which presently became the center of a flourishing Welsh settlement, to supply whose religious needs Radnor church was organized in 1820. In 1818 other colonies fixed themselves in Gallia and Jackson, attracted especially by the opening mines of iron and coal. In '32 it seemed to certain enterprising land-owners about Paddy's Run that that section was suffering from a plethora of population, or else

they were allured by stories concerning the newly discovered paradise up in Allen county on the borders of the Black Swamp. At any rate, eight families emigrated thither that year, located in Sugar Creek township, and in '35 by covenanting together brought the Gomer church into being. This representative of our polity, situated a few miles to the northwest of Lima, disputes with the Plain church, just west of Bowling Green in Wood county, the claim of being the oldest in that newest portion of the state. Palmyra township in Portage county, had already been invaded by a troop of Welshmen bent on securing homes, who eventually secured almost entire possession, bought the sanctuary of a dying American Congregational church, and set themselves up ecclesiastically in '34.

In the meantime the large cities had been offering attractions to a large fraction of the Welsh immigration, as is proved by the appearance of Washington Ave. (Town St.), Columbus church in '37; Lawrence St., Cincinnati, in '40, and Youngstown in '47. The coming of Cleveland South was delayed until '59. In all our Welsh churches number 42, with a membership of over 3,000. With his eye upon those which were organized in the first half of the century, Rev. John P. Williams writes: "They were blessed with good and faithful ministers, who met their trials and difficulties with heroic spirit, when the country was first settled, and their names are in sweet remembrance in the churches as pioneers. Such as J. A. Davies, of Siloam; I. Davies, of Tyn Rhos; Thomas Edwards, Cincinnati; John Morgan Thomas, Alliance; D. Davies; James Davies, Radnor; Rees Powell, Troedrhiwdalar; J. H. Jones, Delaware; John Edwards, Crab Creek, etc." Rev. B. W. Chidlaw ranks among the heroes for God in the state, while not a few of the Welsh ministers for sterling qualities of mind and heart, for earnest deeds and useful lives, belong in the category with our very best. Our Cymric fellow disciples are worshipful and zeal-

ous in their religious make, in living the gospel probably they succeed in everyday life as well as the average Anglo-Saxon saint, while in singing the gospel they leave us far behind. In lifting up psalms and hymns and spiritual songs not many can match them. As for the churches, a few of them are quite strong, Gomer leading with 355 members, Youngstown following with 300, Cincinnati Lawrence St. with 194, Cleveland South with 206, and Columbus Washington St. with 145. Only 10 have a membership of more than 100, while 22 have less than 50, and 6 have less than 10. Except in the cities the Welsh churches are on the whole quite steadily losing ground, and from this serious combination of causes : Those in rural districts, like many of their class all the land over, because the population is diminishing ; and for the same reason those in coal and iron districts, where the mines are failing, or where strikes and other business perturbations make work and wages uncertain. But with scarcely room for doubt, the principal cause is of another sort altogether, is removable, is wholly in the hands of the churches and pastors, either to be removed, or to be suffered to remain and work mischief. With all their might the elders are likely to cling to their mother tongue, and to the ways in which their fathers walked in the land beyond the sea. The fact is not fully appreciated that in this country English should be, must be, will be the speech of all citizens. But the younger generation, the boys and girls born this side of the Atlantic, are wholly inclined at any cost to be as their neighbors, at least as to the general features of daily practice, in religion as well as elsewhere. And, sure as the world, this latter tendency is destined to prevail. To this irresistible decree of fate, rather of heaven, every denomination in the United States must bow in obedience, sooner or later. But meanwhile the struggle waxes hot between the old and the young, those who would keep things as they are and those who propose to square themselves to

the facts of the present and the future. On the question of Welsh vs. English, churches are rent in twain, congregations dwindle to a handful, and children to their parents are antagonistic. Reason and a truly Christian spirit would seem to indicate that the elders, who at the best must soon pass away, should make haste to yield cheerfully for the lasting and unspeakable benefit of their sons and daughters. If this should come to pass, and then further, the Welsh conferences as such should disappear, it would be a day most blessed for our beloved Zion. Let the example of Paddy's Run, the mother church, find many imitators. Several Welsh churches were represented when at Mansfield the State Association was formed in '52. It was a great step forward when in '67 the names of all appeared upon the pages of the Minutes. God hasten the day when Ohio Congregationalists shall be "all with one accord in one place;" when there shall be "neither Jew nor Greek," but Jesus Christ all in all.

RECENT DEVELOPMENT.

It was not until about twenty-five years ago that Congregationalism in Ohio really got upon its feet and with limbs reasonably free set forward upon its course of helping to redeem and hold the state to righteousness. Let us glance at some of the phenomena which appear in this period, taking note not only of the brighter phases of things, but also of such as are less pleasant to contemplate. And first, a steady and fairly rapid increase in the number of churches can be traced. Going back somewhat further, 24 were added to our list in the fifties, counting only those which still survive. During the sixties, the period of the war, but 18 were organized, the next decade gave birth to 25, the eighties to 36, while the last decade of the century, of which a full half is still future, already increases the catalogue of the sisterhood

by no less than 29. The total of churches formed since 1850 is 132. The location of these more recent comers is as significant and cheering as their number. This is the era of the growth of cities, and our denomination which in the first half of the century strengthened itself mainly in the rural districts, is now handsomely redeeming itself by entering in at the many open doors offered by the chief centers of population. At least 60 of the 132 are found in the cities or larger villages, and thus have a reasonable assurance of a long and prosperous career. Another omen of good is found in the fact that we are more and more bursting the boundaries within which our fathers seem to have judged we were fated to be confined, the twelve counties of the Reserve, to-wit, and are manifesting both our right and our ability to live and thrive in central, southern and western Ohio. Since 1870 Congregational churches to the number of 90 have been organized, and of these 54 are located in divers parts of this "non-Congregational" area. Though this most important undertaking is sadly and criminally belated, we may well rejoice and take courage that such progress has been made. Yes, and with our Bohemian, and Swedish, and Finnish and German churches, we are proving ourselves to have outlived that mingled heresy and humbug that our free polity was divinely ordained for Yankees only. Five and twenty years since our churches numbered just 200, and our ministers 173, of whom 37 were without pastoral charge. Ten years later 230 churches were reported, and 182 ministers; in '90 they increased to 250 and 227; while now (Minutes of '96) they stand at 264 and 234. The membership of the churches and of the Sunday-schools at the same intervals tell the same story of constant advance. In '70 the figures were respectively, 16,862 and 19,196; in '80 they had grown to 23,868 and 27,381; in '90 they stood at 34,633 and 37,014; and according to the latest returns they have climbed to 39,052 and 36,292.

A marked development can be traced in the increase of instrumentalities for furthering Christian activity, as well as methods of work. Thus the various women's missionary societies have come into being and the Christian Endeavor movement, etc., etc. Our denominational Sunday-school work has been pushed as never before, thanks largely to our Sunday-school and Publishing Society with Rev. W. F. McMillen as its devoted representative. Just here it was that not a few of our newer churches had their beginning. With such encouragement our children and youth are learning rapidly to bear their full share of service and beneficent giving. As for our denominational beneficences, in the fifties like all our other denominational affairs, they were in a jumble. By many whose anti-slavery convictions were intense the American Board was too half-hearted and mealy-mouthed to be countenanced, and so the American Missionary Association was organized in '46,* which also did home missionary work for some of our needy churches; and through various boards and committees the friends of Oberlin were constantly contributing for the support of its suspected and ostracised graduates who were toiling among the Indians, and the ex-slaves of Canada and the West Indies. As we have seen the Connecticut Missionary Society entered Ohio in 1800, nor for three and fifty years did it weary of sending annually thousands of dollars to this needy field. In all, this cherishing mother commissioned and sustained 87 missionaries in this state, by whom a total of 635 years of exhausting service were bestowed. Twenty of the number labored ten years or more, eight remained twenty or more, while one, Rev. A. H. Betts, completed a term of thirty-two years (1821–53).

In 1826 the American Home Missionary Society came

*And hence, while our churches are celebrating their hundredth anniversary, this Society, with such an honorable record, is calling to remembrance its half-century of service.

into being, while the Plan of Union was in full sway, and for some thirty years knew no distinction between Presbyterian and Congregationalist. In '52 when the State Association began to evoke and foster and fashion and organize our denominational work in the state, Rev. Lysander Kelsey was home missionary superintendent (for central and southern Ohio, '57–63, and the entire state, '63–73), and was an active participant in the annual meetings. At the end of ten years the relations of the Association and the Home Missionary Society were found so unsatisfactory that the project was broached of forming a state body to look after the home needs, and in '63 this was done. Rev. H. M. Storrs was secretary for a season, and was followed by Mr. Kelsey, who then began to serve in that capacity. The year preceding a radical new departure had been taken by resolving, "That it is expedient to organize a State Home Missionary Society, auxiliary to the A. H. M. S. at New York," and, "That on and after the 1st of July, 1872, the Congregational churches of Ohio will do their own missionary work." Brave words, and no doubt, uttered sincerely in courage and hope. But somehow, in the years ensuing the deeds failed to match. In '73 it was voted that the churches ought to raise $10,000 for home evangelization, and that no salaried secretary should be employed. Only $7,860 resulted from the call, in part because hard times had struck the country. In '74 Rev. Samuel Wolcott appears as secretary, and continues till '81. In '75 the day is spoken of when "Ohio will be paying her own expenses, and helping A. H. M. S. in the regions beyond." Occasionally it happened that more money was raised in the state than was expended in the state, but it was sure to be so that the receipts would soon fall below the mark and all prospect of independence would vanish. Or the legacies would reach a handsome figure, only to sink for several years to the zero point. More than once hope deferred has made the hearts sick of those who longed for the en-

largement of Zion. In '80 the fact was published that Ohio held the bad eminence of exhibiting a lower rate of beneficent giving than any other state, and a few years later that the average here was but $0.30 for each member, and in the country at large $0.61. In '89 the gifts of the living reached $13,158, which was $3,000 more than O. H. M. S. had ever received. No doubt, it is just at this point that the outlook for Congregational Ohio presents its seamiest side to the observer. How shall our denominational work, now an hundred years old, come finally and forever to self-support? For years this lamentable case has been discussed and pondered upon, and diligent search has been made for the seat of the trouble. As with most chronic ailments, the cause is likely to be manifold. Probably no single statement will contain so large a fraction of the explanation as this one: Of our churches only a comparatively few are large and wealthy. The bulk of them are below the line of self-support, or else are just above it. Of the total number, 137, more than half, have less than 100 members, and 77 have less than 50. And these figures include the absentees, who in most cases constitute a large percentage. More then half our churches, then, are in the midst of a hard struggle for bare life. Though their benefactions doubtless might be, and ought to be, far larger, yet the sad failure to make them so is not at all surprising. Especially when we look further and find that last year 57 of these churches were reported as without pastors, and some of them had been in this condition for years.*

Recent years have brought yet another source of embarrassment and possible serious harm. The cities are organizing themselves for local home missionary work, which is well, and even necessary. Or if societies are not formed, the strong self-supporting churches plan and push for new organizations in their vicinity, and bestow liberal financial aid. It is doubt-

*For a table of statistics showing the growth of Congregationalism in the state see page 95.

less in this way that the suburbs so rapidly springing up can be cared for most wisely and efficiently. But the danger is by no means imaginary that the vision of the city churches, and so their interest, their prayers and their giving will be withdrawn from the general work of the state. Large and wealthy churches can be found whose home missionary aggressive energy in behalf of the Kingdom is almost wholly expended upon objects within two or three miles of their sanctuary. But is it not spiritually damaging thus to narrow the circumference of our sympathies and our benefactions? And besides, who then is to care for the farming communities which need assistance, and the smaller towns? "All one body, we," and so city should pray and give for the redemption of country, and country for city. Why can it not be so arranged that the urban organizations shall be but another phase of the state body, it doing the work through them, they auxiliary to it? Their undertakings might well be started only after consultation with representatives of the O. H. M. S., and all their receipts and expenditures be regularly reported in the state Minutes. An excellent step was taken last year, when, after giving certain facts and figures relating to the state society proper, a paragraph was inserted telling how churches in six of our cities had expended $4,404 upon enterprises in their immediate neighborhood. But the strange fact came out thereby that this sum, which amounted to about one-third of all that was raised for home missions in the state, did not pass through the treasury of the state society.

WHAT OF THE SECOND CENTURY?

In a desultory and fragmentary way we have traced the beginnings of Congregationalism in Ohio, and its unfolding through the first hundred years; making mention also of

some of the strange experiences through which it has passed. Some of the achievements made have been mentioned, as well as some of the short-comings and derelictions of our career as a denomination. Over many passages of the history we may most fittingly rejoice and be glad. Even a humble pride and godly boasting are by no means out of order. All along a guarding, guiding providence may easily be discovered, while every now and then, here and there, peculiar tokens of divine favor have been bestowed. On the whole, for at least a generation, the lines have fallen to us in pleasant places. And, verily, our ecclesiastical heritage is a goodly one. Therefore with hearty thanksgiving for the past let us glance once more at the present with especial reference to its bearing upon our opportunities and responsibilities in years to come.

We form a body of almost 40,000 disciples of Christ, congregated and organized in more than 250 churches. Only four states in the Union contain more Congregationalists than ours; Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York and Illinois. But what a little company after all compared with the total of church members to be found in this commonwealth, who according to the last census numbered in the aggregate 1,215,000; or omitting the Roman Catholics (336,000), 879,000. We stand no higher than eighth among the Protestant bodies. The Methodists come first with 240,000; and next follow the Presbyterians, 164,000 (Presbyterian, North, 82,000); Lutherans of all kinds, 90,000; Baptists, 69,000; Christians (Disciples), 54,000; United Brethren, 53,000; German Reformed, 36,000; Congregationalists (in 1890), 32,281; Evangelical Synod, 31,617; Christian Connection 26,000; and so on through about 100 sects, some of them able to muster only a few scores. We represent, perhaps, 200,000 in a population of 3,672,000. If numbers were all in all, then we might well sit down in humiliation, with slight enthusiasm or courage. But, another glance

at our geographical limitations will afford a further somewhat discouraging aspect of the situation. In Oberlin we are triumphant (though by no means rampant). No other polity can there even compete with ours. About this community as a center a parallelogram 30 by 50 miles may be constructed containing only a single Presbyterian church, and United Presbyterian at that. New England can scarcely name a territory to match. In Cleveland also we hold an honorable place, and whether as to numerical strength or rate of growth; while on the Reserve as a whole, especially if Mahoning and Trumbull counties lying upon the Pennsylvania line be excepted, our case in many respects is a comfortable one to contemplate.

But, alas, those twelve counties constitute but one-seventh of the area of the state, and within their boundaries are located five-eighths of our churches. Of our 38,328 church members, 25,045 dwell upon the Reserve, and 13,283 in the vast howling wilderness (*in partibus infidelium*) outside. Journey westward and southward and southwestward from our stronghold, and you may traverse many miles and light upon no church of our order. Take the Big Four, for instance, and from Greenwich to Columbus, 83 miles, it is to us ecclesiastically a desert. Go 60 miles further to Dayton, and only one oasis, Springfield, will be passed. Again, from Dayton east it is 80 miles of a dry and thirsty land to Chillicothe; and turning southward from thence, travel about the same distance to Ironton, and you catch but a single glimpse of verdure, at Portsmouth, where within a twelvemonth the waters have begun to flow. Blocks of counties can be found on the map whose benighted inhabitants have not so much as heard of the Congregational name. Such as these three, Defiance, Paulding and Van Wert; these four, Logan, Hardin, Wyandot and Marion; this second quartet, Pickaway, Hocking, Fairfield and Vinton; and this *section of nine* adjacent counties which, if Congrega-

tionalism is essential to the highest well-being of humanity, evidently constitutes Darkest Ohio: Adams, Brown, Clermont, Highland, Fayette, Madison, Greene, Clinton and Warren. The contrast may be made in this way: On the Reserve are Huron county with 10 of our churches, Lorain with 16, Medina with 8, and Portage with 12; 46 in all. Adjoining them on the south, but off the Reserve, are Crawford with 0; Richland with 5; Wayne with 1; and Stark also with 1; a total of 7. Thus it is that while at the northeast we approach sometimes dangerously near to a congested condition, are inconveniently near; elsewhere we are so few and far apart as to be weak, and lonesome, and in peril from ecclesiastical beasts of prey. Of course, in the cities like Columbus, Toledo and Cincinnati we make a much better showing. Nevertheless, in 38 counties out of our 88 no Congregational churches exist, while in 19 more only one in each is to be found. Moreover, a certain Ohio city of 26,000 is utterly destitute of our kind of preaching and praying and thinking and living. Two others of 11,000 for a like reason are to be commiserated, and two of 10,000. It is much to be feared that the millennium is yet far in the future; and the task on hand for the Ohio Home Missionary Society is nothing less than herculean.

And what should our churches do to mend matters? To answer this weighty question, and beginning first of all in a realm quite local and personal: If in any particular we have failed hitherto, we ought to make haste to master, in order that we may fully appreciate the excellence of our fundamental principles, our leading ideas, our characteristic ways of doing. We bring no railing accusation against other denominations, who prize highly much which Congregationalists to the manner born always and everywhere eschew. There are, for example, those who dote on statutes which are man-made, and judicatories, and machinery, and forms, and such like. So be it, if they find them scriptural and

profitable, "For 'tis their nature to." But we hold ours, which is world-wide away from theirs, to be a far more excellent way. Saul's armor is well enough for Saul, but let little David going out against Goliath stick to his simple sling. We have churches composed wholly of "non-Congregational" material, whose members were born and reared in communions which at various points differ widely from ours. Well, they have much to learn, and ought to enter school at once. They need our denominational literature, even to our *Congregationalist* and *Advance*. Only after these let the *Outlook* and *Independent* enter. It behooves them also to seek closest fellowship with their neighbors through councils, conferences, and the like. But even more, an obligation rests upon the ministry to be intelligent and appreciative as touching our distinctive features. In heart and life continually, and often with lip, they ought to exalt our spirit and methods. It is often our joy and sometimes our sorrow, our privilege and also our pain, that ministers in such numbers are flocking to us from other folds. For many of these we are grateful, and of some we are proud. It is complimentary both to them and to us that they were inclined to cast in their lot with us, to join the glorious company of those who love the freedom and simplicity of the Gospel, who cherish a noble confidence in human nature redeemed and divinely led. But with too many we are simply weighted. They are mere emigrants, transferred and not transformed. That is, they failed to bring their hearts. They have no enthusiasm for our best things, and this, perhaps, from lack of accurate and thorough knowledge.* From this source real perils come to our ecclesiastical affairs, just as

*In one of our large cities out of nearly a half score of pastors only a single one is a Congregationalist by birth and education. Ministers can be named who continue to take the denominational papers of the church they left, but have not begun to take the papers of the one to which they have come. Not long since when an offering was to be made for Congregational home missions, the "stewards" were called on to receive the same.

they do to our civil institutions from an influx of those whose opinions and habits and tastes were fashioned in the Old World. It may be that in sheer self-defence our conferences and councils will feel obliged to set up an immigration bureau, an examining board, and a system of probation, and only through them admit to citizenship with Congregational saints. At any rate, all who successfully seek admission ought to consider it their bounden duty at the very soonest to master our history, become acquainted with our watch-words and our great names, find out exactly for what sacred convictions our polity stands. It might not be an ignoble ambition even to treasure up in the memory the exact name of each one of our seven benevolent societies—a height of excellence to which few attain who enter our fellowship after the age of thirty.

It is something to be well informed, it is much more to practice the good things we know. We ought to have faith in our principles, and to them always be loyal. They have been sufficiently tested, and have been found profitable everywhere and for all. They fit exactly the land and the times. Christ is our only master. Under Him, inspired and impelled by His Spirit, we are free from all men. But, nevertheless, we are bound to look also on the things of others, our neighbors, bound to be social and fraternal, to come together in league and coöperation. It is by no means enough, in order to become a good Congregationalist, to be selfish, and resolutely determined at any cost to have one's way. Congregation, conference, and association, these are Congregational words which hold a world of meaning. Conference is talking together, and a conference is for local fellowship. The Association is for state fellowship. Through the National Councils our entire Israel holds sweetest and most profitable communion from sea to sea. All hail the day when, through pan-Congregational Councils, Christians of our name round the whole earth shall assemble often to

pray and plan for the conquest of humanity for the Lord Jesus! Through our noble denominational benevolent societies we have a potent means of fellowship and coöperation. We unite thus to carry the kingdom to the ends of the state, the nation, the world. And thus it is that our sympathies are enlarged and our desires are intensified. Even the best of our churches have much to learn with regard to the blessedness, and the absolute need, of continual communication like this, while too many churches have scarcely taken the first lesson. No body of disciples can prosper spiritually in the best sense without a rational system of beneficent giving for the diffusion of the Gospel at home and abroad, a system, too, which is conscientiously adopted and adhered to, and is pushed with business-like vigor. It must center in the Lord's day and the sanctuary, and be mingled with exhortation, and prayer, and song. It must come near to the front among duties and privileges, must be planned for and prepared for like any other matter of great moment. The giving, to be worth the most to the giver and to the Kingdom, must be regular, must be frequent, and consist of a multitude of sums of which each one is relatively small. It will not answer to fall short of Paul's scheme as laid down in VIII and IX of Second Corinthians, nor in spirit or letter would it be possible to go beyond it. When everybody gives, rich and poor, old and young, gives often of the pennies and the nickels and the dimes, and the sums thus secured are divided among the various objects by a fair percentage,—the American Board, the Congregational Home Missionary Society, the American Missionary Association, the Congregational Church Building Society, the Congregational Education Society, the Congregational Sunday-school and Publishing Society, and Ministerial Relief,—then will all the denominational treasuries overflow, and all our denominational enterprises be greatly enlarged, and strengthened, and made mighty for the diffusion of Chris-

tianity as it is loved and lived among us. In particular, if such a celestial spirit should enter our churches to abide and take possession, our Home Missionary Society would know no lack of funds for the carrying on of its much needed aggressive work in all parts of the state.

HOW MAKE THE CENTENARY NOTABLE.

A knowledge of history is good in great part because of the help it gives to right living, and it always behooves us to make a practical application to character and conduct of the facts we gather. It is therefore by no means the part of wisdom to suffer these days of peculiar privilege and opportunity to come and go with mere talk and jubilation, mere reminiscence and kindling of emotion. Surely this centennial celebration should bear fruit in toil for the Master of far better quality, and in much greater abundance.

THE HOME MISSIONARY SITUATION.

To be more pointed and specific, let us glance again at the task providentially laid upon our denomination as related to the spiritual well-being of this magnificent commonwealth. And as setting forth our weakest point, our most serious as well as most unaccountable dereliction, let us give good heed to the words of one who from almost a decade of constant observation and study can speak with an authority which is imperative. Who that knows Dr. J. G. Fraser, since '87 the gifted and tireless secretary of our Ohio Home Missionary Society, his singular aptness and industry, his unbounded enthusiasm and consecration, can afford to pass by the paragraphs from his pen which follow without giving them due consideration?

Two years ago the special committee said that "Ohio can never heartily respect herself until she makes and maintains a record of $10,000 a year from

ordinary sources, with normal increase from year to year." One year ago it was said, "the gifts here reported from the living are nearly $1,000 behind the figures which caused and seemed to justify such words." And now, in this Centennial year, the gifts of the living have fallen off $500 more, and stand at $7,803.81, the lowest point reached in ten years. And to this it must be added that of this amount $200 represents two shares in the Gen. Howard Fund, and over $300 is from Mrs. Caswell's Dime Banks, distributed a year ago, leaving less than $7,300 from sources to be relied upon from year to year. Four legacies, aggregating $4,011, make the total $11,814.81.

This completes one hundred years of Congregational life and history in Ohio, and July 1st, 1896, the Ohio Home Missionary Society will enter upon its 25th year. The situation which confronts the Home Missionary Society, which means the denomination, is as grave as any it ever encountered. The work was never more urgent, nor insistent, nor hopeful. The ebbing tide of population still weakens the country churches; the throbbing life of the city offers opportunities and obligations which must be met at once or sacrificed forever. Our pathway is unreturning: "Ye shall henceforth return no more that way." The foreigner in Ohio never needed the gospel more, nor showed more evidence of willingness to receive it. It is already intimated that we must soon add the Germans to those to whom we must give the gospel in their own tongue. Down-town problems and institutional work link themselves with Home Missions in Ohio. And yet, to speak in round numbers, of $12,000, received last year,* more than one-third represented legacies, and definitely less than two-thirds gifts of the living from ordinary sources. Under the law of probabilities, legacies will be few and small for a year or two to come, and under the amended compact with the National Society which reads: "Provided that in no case shall any Auxiliary receive more money than has been raised within its bounds for Home Missions during the

*Elsewhere Dr. F. adds under the head of "City Missions": An itemimized account is herewith submitted of distinctive Home Missionary work done as shown by expenditures in the various cities of the State where Home Missionary work is done direct, either in whole or in part. It is meant to cover aid given by churches toward the support of other churches or missions, but not toward lots or church buildings.

Akron, First Church for Arlington Street		$ 305 05
Cincinnati, Congregational Missionary Society		316 66
Cleveland, City Missionary Society	$1,131 60	
" Euclid Ave. Church for Lakeview Church	401 50	1,533 10
Columbus, First Church		1,415 70
Mansfield, First Church for Mayflower		137 50
Toledo, First Church Sunday School for Plymouth	$400 00	
" " " for Birmingham	100 00	
" Central Church for Birmingham	100 00	600 00
A total of		$4,308 01

Which should be added to the figures already given, to fairly represent our whole Home Missionary work in the State, and making an aggregate of $16,122.82.

year, and including legacies to the National Society contained in wills dated subsequently to the organization of the respective State Societies," it is doubtful whether Ohio will be allowed to use them if they come. Is Ohio ready to plan its work on a basis of $7,500?

WHAT SHALL WE DO?

First. Let us find out what is the matter. Is it the general financial paralysis, or something peculiar to us? Would it be better if our work were more thoroughly united, by the bringing of the city work, at least where city missionary societies do not exist, under the direct care of the State Society?

Second. Let us adopt a present policy:

1. At least one contribution every year from every church for Home Missions.

2. A wise, deliberate, patient, persistent, enthusiastic use of this centennial year, to quicken our "Congregational Self-Consciousness," and carry our gifts over the bar on which they have been stuck so long, into the deep channel.

3. A larger and fuller and abiding sense of our responsibility, our obligation, our opportunity, our privilege, for the commonwealth, the nation and the Kingdom of God.

Well, why not make the year memorable by raising for home missions at least $20,000 before April 1, 1897? It can easily be done if every member of every church shall make but an extremely moderate gift. Why are not extra and special thank-offerings wholly in order; preceded by such an enthusiastic and inspiring presentation of, A Hundred Years of Congregationalism in Ohio as every pastor should be able and inclined to prepare for his people? Let us see: We are an army some 40,000 in the state. Or, subtracting for absentees, call it 35,000. A dime from each one of these (a sum how ridiculously and almost contemptibly small, the cost of a "good" cigar, a glass of soda with a friend, or a round-trip ticket on a street car line) would bring $3,500 into the treasury of the Lord, and which added to the largest sum named above would reach the near neighborhood of $20,000. If need be, let a conscientious and thorough canvass be made from house to house throughout all the congregations, by a committee going out two by two, with hearts courageous and faces all beaming with smiles, with

twenty-five cents from each as the ideal. The astounding outcome would be no less than $8,750. And what substantial enlargement to Zion would presently ensue. Meantime let some real, rational, Christian *system* of beneficent giving be introduced and worked up into efficiency, to keep the high-water mark gained by the centennial enthusiasm, and Ohio's chronic, perplexing, and provoking home missionary problem would be finally solved. Forever after we should be found paying our own bills, and besides, according to our ability, also helping to evangelize the needy regions beyond.

OUR FOUR-FOLD WORK.

Having made such ample provision of the sinews of war, pastors and churches may well consider carefully the religious needs of the state, or the various kinds of home missionary work which need to be undertaken and continually carried on. The briefest statement of these must here suffice. Four paragraphs will cover them fairly well. They are not by any means entirely distinct, are found rather in close conjunction and strangely interblended.

1. Work in the cities and larger towns. In these centers occurs the principal growth of population. New churches must be formed, and in almost every case for a few years must be nourished from the outside. Then they will become strong and able to return what they have received, and much more.

2. Work in the rural districts, where the population is diminishing, the best days are in the past, and the future is dark. For various reasons some of these country churches must be ministered to year by year. It would be unchristian, and inhuman, to suffer them to die without sympathy and help. Nor is it easy to decide just what proportion of the funds at command should here be expended.

3. Work for the foreign-born. In God's providence they are here, and for us to Americanize and Christianize.

As Congregationalists we hold in trust a priceless boon. We must give them a pure, simple, nineteenth-century Gospel, and help them to use democracy as not abusing it. They are our brothers, for whom Christ died as well as for us. Our polity is profitable for them as for us.

4. From our stronghold upon the Western Reserve, and in the large cities, we must not fail to watch continually for providential openings for the introduction of such work as we can undertake. Ohio, central, and southern, and western, is territory for us to occupy at the soonest in the Master's name; though, thank God, we have *no call in the least* to propagandize and proselyte.

So keeping the feast, so using the centennial year as to give a new impulse to our denominational development, then he who an hundred years hence is called to write the story of the second century of Congregationalism in Ohio will have opportunity to make mention of works of divine grace and mercy yet more marvelous, and sublime.

A TABLE

SHOWING THE GROWTH OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES IN OHIO FOR TWENTY-FIVE YEARS.

YEAR.	Church Members.	Sunday School Scholars.	Home Missions.	Total Contributions.	Church Expenses.
1870	16,930	19,786	4,611	48,125	169,432
1871	16,862	19,196	7,924	64,104	226,346
1872	17,281	19,994	5,772	51,144	165,820
1873	17,234	19,457	5,230	47,114	221,907
1874	18,214	20,242	6,312	50,664	212,983
1875	18,688	20,437	5,777	50,065	197,466
1876	21,715	23,910	5,534	36,678	291,147
1877	22,719	25,447	3,869	37,449	195,730
1878	23,057	27,319	3,881	36,435	217,833
1879	23,392	26,690	4,264	41,726	213,914
1880	23,367	27,109	4,483	36,387	213,206
1881	23,868	27,381	5,396	63.548	230,543
1882	24,859	28,640	6,743	64,821	225,827
1883	25,735	29,166	8,818	58,162	270,482
1884	26,105	29,531	11,095	56,870	255,548
1885	27,178	30,558	9,148	44,148	223,393
1886	27,652	30,160	9,089	49,305	222,822
1887	28,361	30,025	12,252	50,766	316,272
1888	30,116	33,380	17,624	59,295	258,688
1889	31,212	35,166	21,407	67,260	249,299
1890	32,297	36,036	12,943	64,414	284,345
1891	34,633	37,014	15,302	70,245	341,092
1892	35,625	36,611	15,464	79,883	358,560
1893	36,380	36,803	15,160	62,102	367,621
1894	37,958	37,849	17,540	63,739	326,974
1895	38,328	36,292	16,123	65,397	382,406

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